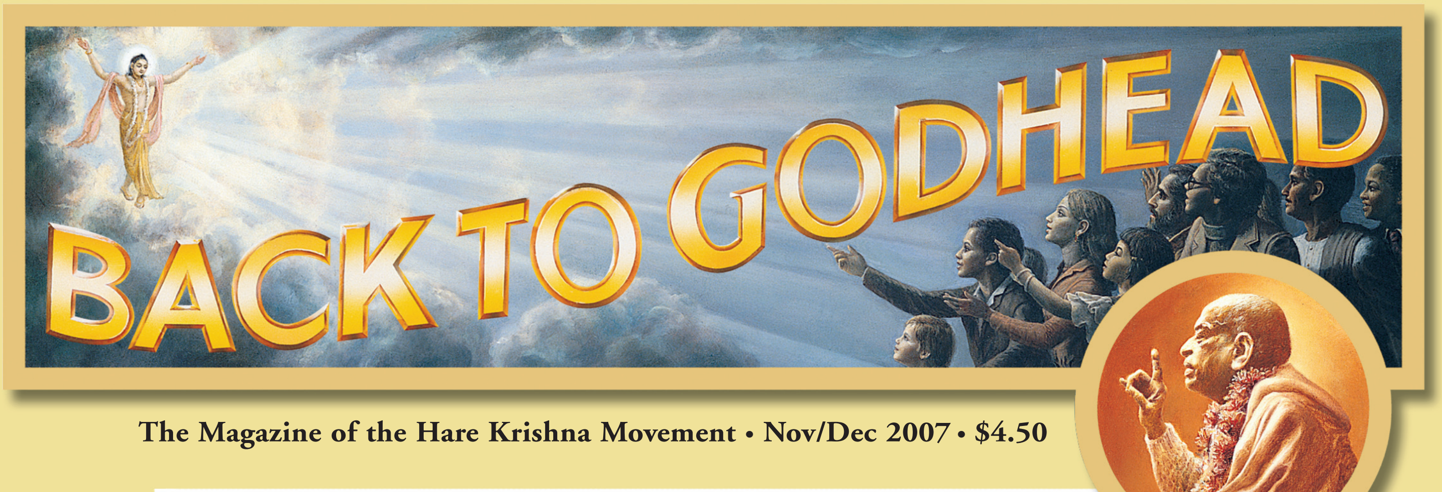
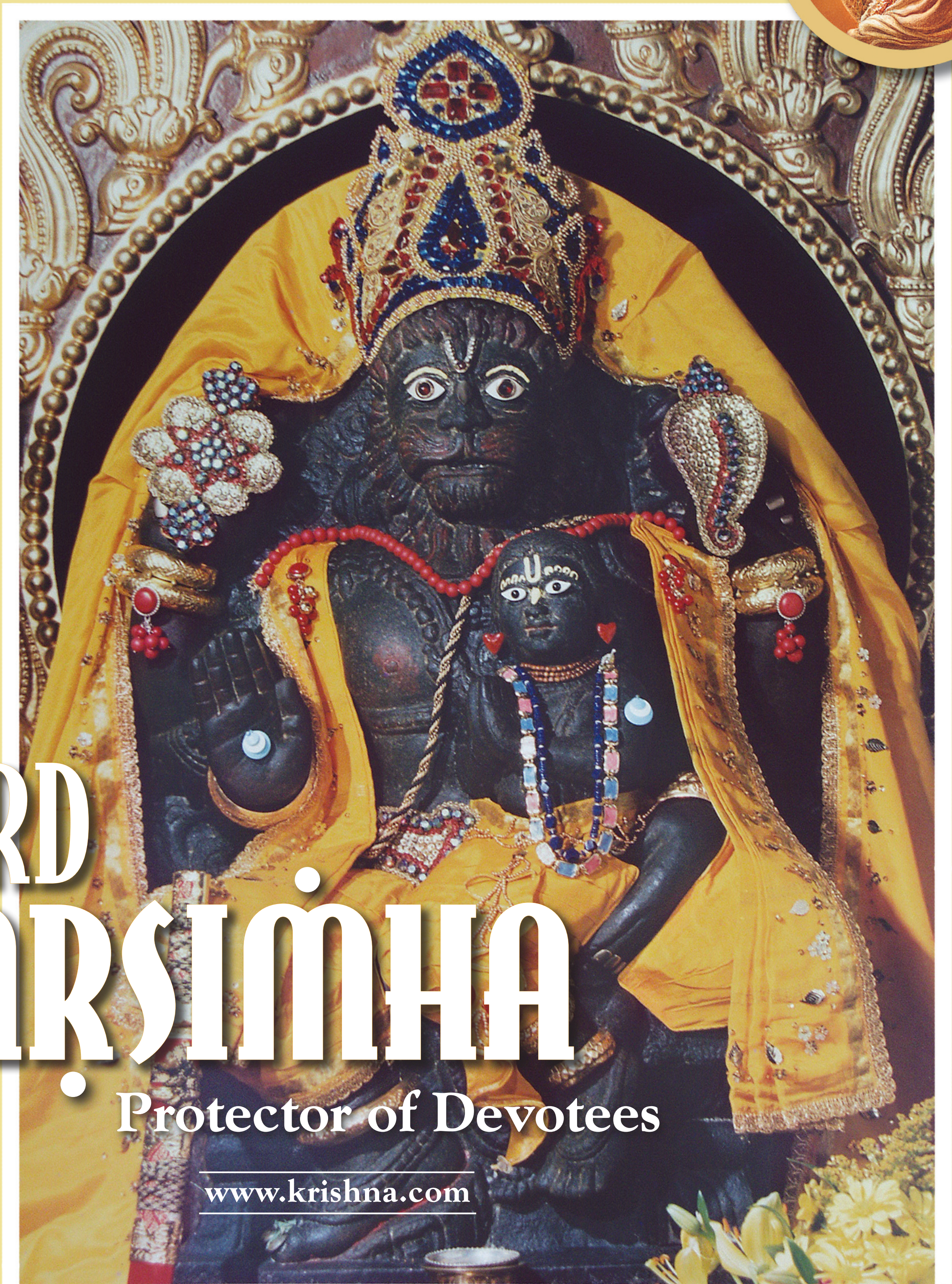
Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.



BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement • Nov/Dec 2007 • $4.50



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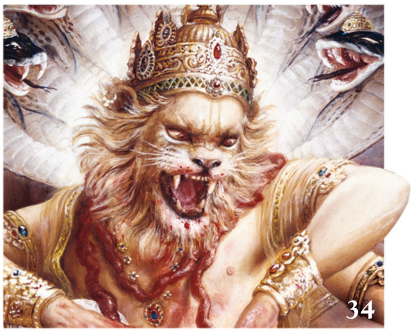

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God is present within our hearts, waiting for us to turn to Him.

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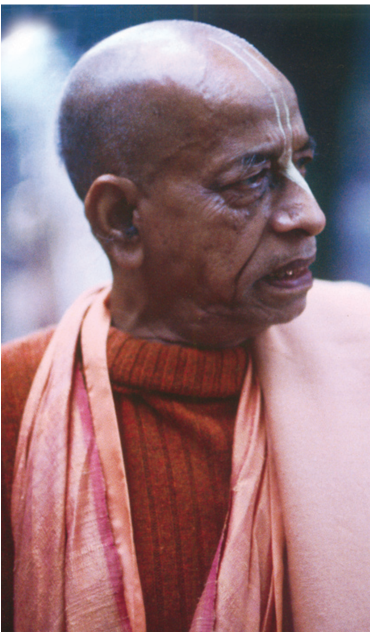
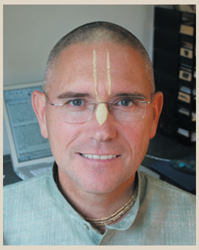
COVER This deity of Lord Nṛsiṁha, Lord Kṛṣṇa's half-man, half-lion incarnation, is worshiped at the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple in Jandelsbrunn, Germany. Please see the article about this fiercest of Kṛṣṇa's avatars beginning on page 34. (Photo by Kapilāśva Dāsa.)



"It will be settled at death. A rascal may think foolishly that life is absurd—but death will not be absurd. Lord Kṛṣṇa says, 'Everyone must finally accept Me—as death.' You don't want to die, and I don't want to die; but both of us have to accept that supreme authority. That is God."
—p. 31

WELCOME



THIS ISSUE contains a graphic painting (pp. 34–35) of Lord Nṛsiṁha, Kṛṣṇa's half-man, half-lion incarnation, ripping apart Hiraṇyakaśipu, an atheistic king hell-bent on killing his own son. Someone seeing a painting of Lord Nṛsiṁha for the first time might react with shock and skepticism. How could God do such a thing?

Kṛṣṇa's devotees react differently. This fierce form of Kṛṣṇa shows how much He loves His servants and will do anything to protect them. And there's background to the story: Hiraṇyakaśipu was himself a servant of the Lord, playing the role of a wicked king to give Kṛṣṇa a chance to display some righteous anger.

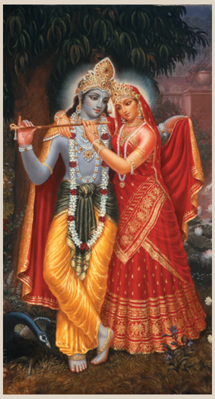
Appreciating Lord Nṛsiṁha's actions requires a well-rounded spiritual education. When Śrīla Prabhupāda arrived in America, he carried that education with him in the erudite tradition he embodied. From the moment he landed, he sought opportunities to teach others deep spiritual truths.

In this issue, Sally and Gopal Agarwal tell us about Prabhupāda's earliest days in America. While their accounts of an elderly Indian swami encountering a foreign culture are charming and sometimes humorous, they also show the dedication with which Prabhupāda pursued his mission of bringing to the world devotion to Kṛṣṇa and His avatars.

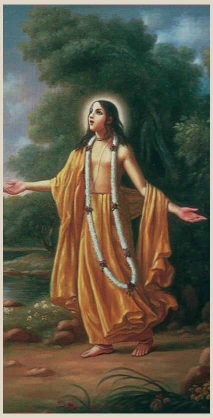
Hare Kṛṣṇa.—*Nāgarāja Dāsa, Editor*

OUR PURPOSES

- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God as taught by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.



Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are together the one Supreme Absolute Truth.



Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the combined incarnation of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, inaugurated the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa five hundred years ago.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

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The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

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Letters

Irked by Ink

"Inking with the Supreme," by Madhava Smullen, in the September/October issue encourages tattooing in our ISKCON movement. But outside of the clay *tilaka* markings with which we adorn our bodies, there is no mention in *śāstra* of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas marking their bodies, especially not with ink tattoos.

The article describes the process of branding the body with symbols of Viṣṇu, but this is done specifically by followers of Rāmānuja in the Śrī Sampradāya.

In *Rāga-vartma-candrikā,* Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that for Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas branding the body with marks of Viṣṇu is not appropriate.

Closer to home, Śrīla Prabhupāda never encouraged such a practice. One might argue that he didn't oppose it either, but I think it's safer to conclude that if he didn't specifically condone it we shouldn't introduce a new so-called devotional practice.

How is a tattoo any different than a picture? In fact, it often *is* a picture. Do we take a painting of Kṛṣṇa into the toilet? Of course, one can quote Gopāla Guru Gosvāmī, who said to Lord Caitanya that the holy name is so pure that it can be chanted anywhere—even in the restroom—but no such concession has ever been given for a deity of the Lord.

"The deity form of the Lord is said to appear in eight varieties: stone, wood, metal, earth, paint, sand, the mind, or jewels." (*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*)

"One of the eight kinds of deity is the two-dimensional, painted picture. The devotee may worship the picture *mūrti* . . . just as he worships a three-dimensional *mūrti.*" (*Pañcarātra-pradīpa,* ISKCON GBC Press)

The author tries hard to establish that tattooing is a Vaiṣṇava practice, but other than one quote from Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa he gives no other scriptural reference and not a single precedent for such a practice in our Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition. Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa writes that branding the symbols of Viṣṇu on the body is an example of austerity, but again, Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura (Baladeva's guru) clearly states that Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas themselves don't do this. Did Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, Gaura Kiśora Dāsa Bābājī, or Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura brand their bodies with symbols of Viṣṇu or have tattoos? No. In fact, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote against branding:

"In the Śrī Sampradāya of Rāmānuja, *tapa* [austerity] is given by branding the body with the symbols of conch and disc, but Śrī Caitanyadeva has instructed that we mark the body with *harināma* using sandal paste, etc., instead of brands. This rule is a blessing for the souls of Kali-yuga." (*Pañca Saṁskāra,* page 2)

My fear is that the practice of tattooing (against the specific instructions of our previous *ācāryas*) will become a tradition in our movement in due course of time. We can't dovetail anything and everything and call it spiritual. For me "devotional tattoos" are introducing something new. Śrīla Prabhupāda warned us against introducing new practices.

One last argument is that although tattooing is becoming more acceptable in society, it is not so widespread that it can be called a common practice among the mass of people. It is still very marginal. We are presenting the highest culture (wherein there is no tattooing), which means we must always present ourselves as ladies and gentlemen.

Indradyumna Swami
Via the Internet

Madhava Smullen replies: You have made many excellent and valid points in your letter, and I think that if serious devotees are considering getting a tattoo they should study your objections and think twice before they make a decision. At no stage was it my intention to promote tattooing or to instill it as an ISKCON tradition. I do not have any tattoos myself, and most probably never will. But it is simply a fact that many devotees and friends of Kṛṣṇa get devotional tattoos, a cultural phenomena that makes for an interesting article. And that's all it was meant to be—not an endorsement. I hope this is obvious from the article and that I have given a balanced perspective of the phenomenon, including its negative sides.

Regarding the problem of bringing a picture of Kṛṣṇa into the bathroom, once again I will not defend tattoos or contest your objections. But I will point out that we seem to make exceptions about bringing holy items into the bathroom when they're attached to our bodies. For example, our Tulasī neck beads (what to speak of Kṛṣṇa in the heart) and our *tilaka* (which represents, in one interpretation, Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa). So this may be a subject of further discussion for devotees.

This article is relevant because tattoos are becoming more and more mainstream, no longer restricted to "lower class" people such as motorcycle gangs. Sure, tattoos may not be recommended for strict devotees living in the temple, but is not Kṛṣṇa consciousness also for the t-shirted and tattooed? Do we want to prohibit something that doesn't have a specific rule against it, and alienate so many? If people want to express their devotion with tattoos, why not let them do it? Do we need to control such expressions of devotion?

And would it really be such a bad thing if millions of people started wearing Kṛṣṇa tattoos? Our *ācāryas* were always looking for ways to get Kṛṣṇa into the public consciousness, and as demonstrated in the article, tattoos are doing exactly that.

Distinguishing Bhakti From Gauṇa-dharma

Your July/August issue was wonderful, with its Tirupati article and intelligent contributions from devotees. However, a comment by one devotee, "Raising my child is my favorite type of devotional service . . ." was technically incorrect. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī comments on *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.61) that "duties of the world" that are connected with the Supreme are "subsidiary spiritual functions (*gauṇa-dharma*)," being helpful for the growth of *bhakti*. Begetting and caring for children is such a function, not actually

(*please turn to page 21*)

CORRECTION

The article "Why Kṛṣṇa Appears as Jagannātha," in the last issue, mentions that the poetess Mādhavī Devī was Rāmānanda Rāya's sister. The author got this information from a book by an Orissan scholar, but a closer look at this scholar's work reveals that he may have mistakenly mixed up two personalities of that period. We have no further information to specify the identity of the Mādhavī Devī quoted in the article.

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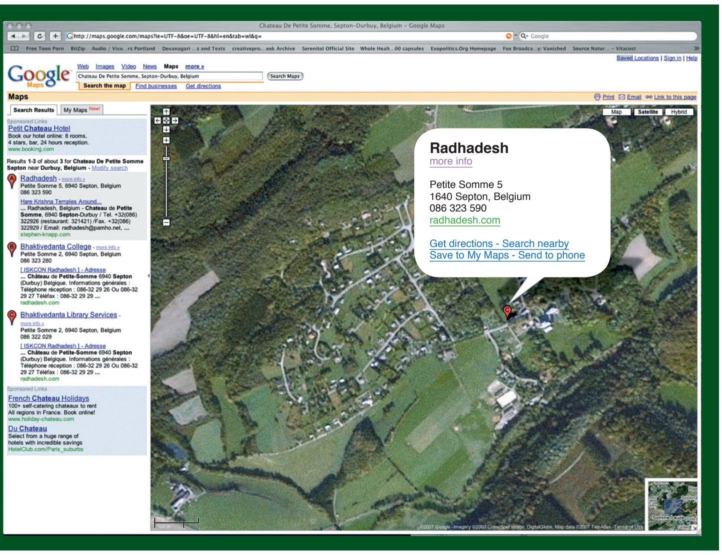
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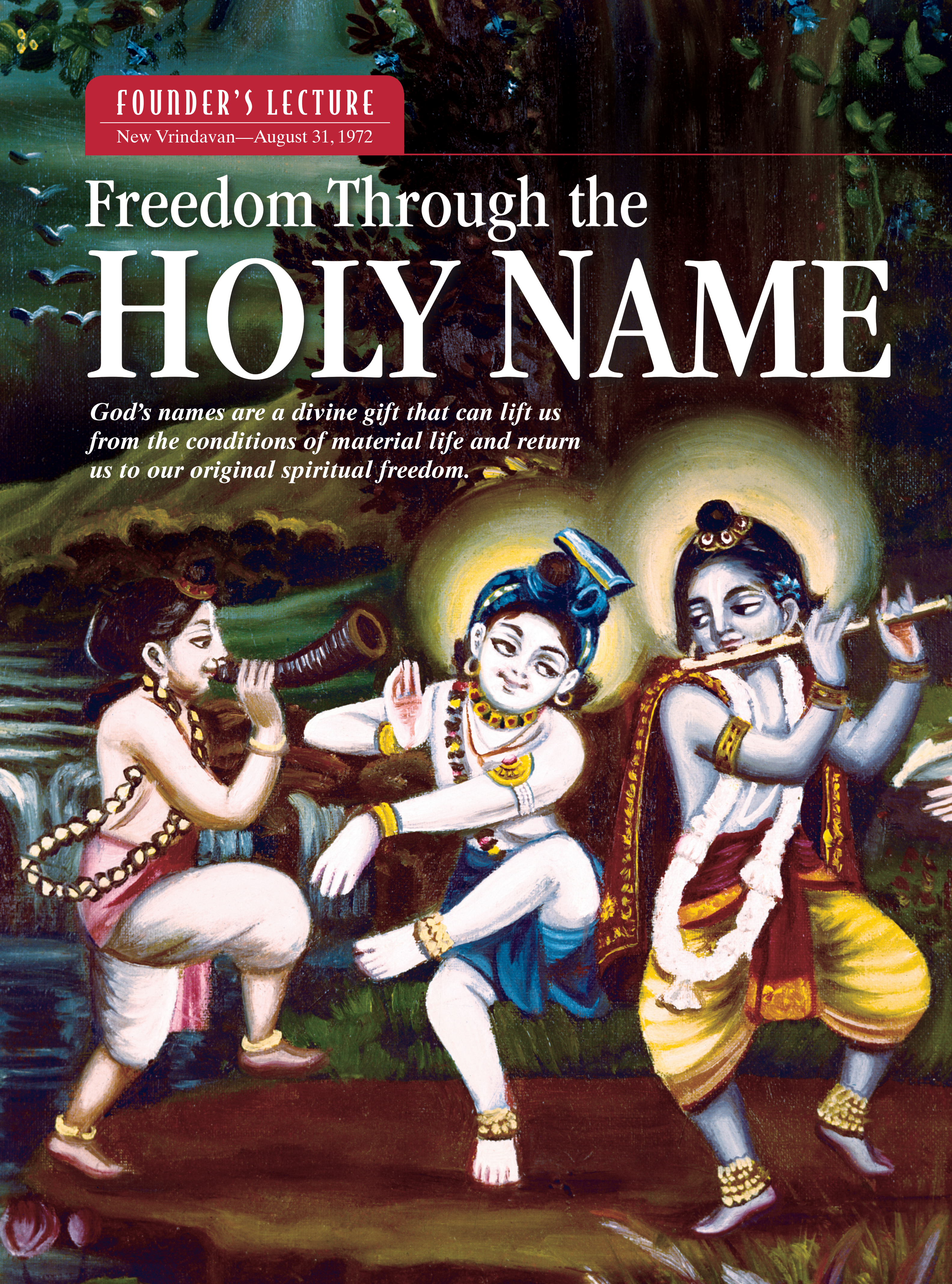
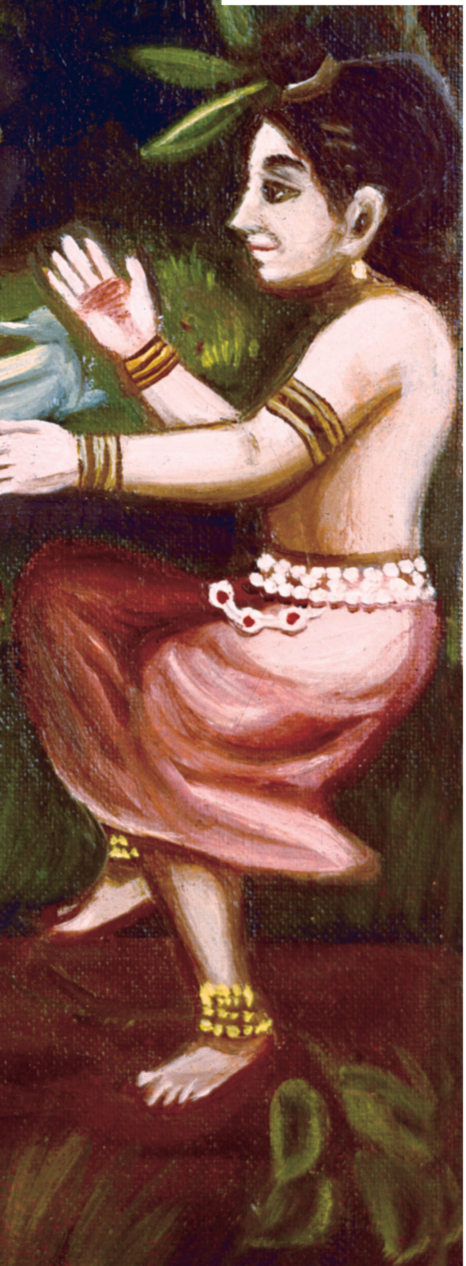
FOUNDER'S LECTURE

New Vrindavan—August 31, 1972

Freedom Through the HOLY NAME

God's names are a divine gift that can lift us from the conditions of material life and return us to our original spiritual freedom.

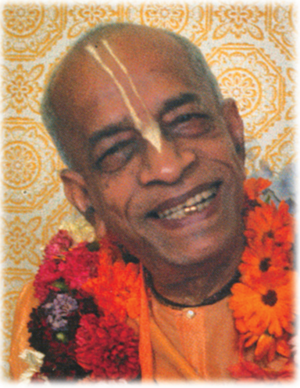




Yamarāja Dāsa

by His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness



LADIES and gentlemen, I thank you very much for kindly participating in this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. This knowledge, *bhāgavata-dharma,* was spoken by Bhagavān Himself, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. *Bhagavān* is a Sanskrit word. *Bhaga* means fortune, and *vān* means one who possesses. So *bhagavān* means the supreme fortunate. There are six principal opulences: beauty, wealth, strength, fame, knowledge, and renunciation. One who possesses these in full, without any rival, is called Bhagavān.

Bhāgavata-dharma means the relationship between the devotees and the Lord. The Lord is Bhagavān and the devotee is *bhāgavata,* or in relationship with Bhagavān. Everyone is related with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, just as a father and son are related. That relation cannot be broken at any stage, but sometimes it happens that the son, out of his own independence, goes out of his home and forgets the affectionate relationship with the father. In your country it is not a very extraordinary thing. So many sons leave the father's affectionate home. Everyone has that independence. Similarly, we are all sons of God, but we are, at the same time, independent. Not fully independent, but independent. We have the tendency of independence because God is fully independent and we are born of God. Although we cannot be absolutely independent, as God is, we have the

Right: Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, as the devotees above are doing at Jacksonville Beach, Florida, is the essence of bhakti-yoga, *which culminates in our return to Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world (left), where, it is said, "every step is a dance, every word a song."*

tendency to think, “I shall become independent.”

We living entities are part of God. When we want to live independently of God, the conditional stage of our existence begins. “Conditional stage” means we accept a material body, which is conditioned in so many ways. For example, the body undergoes six kinds of change: It is born at a certain date, it remains for some time, it grows, it gives some byproducts, it dwindles, and at last it vanishes.

Besides these six changes of the body, we face many tribulations. There are the threefold miseries: those pertaining to the body and mind, those offered by other living entities, and those caused by natural disturbances. And the whole thing is summarized into four principles, namely birth, death, old age, and disease. Together these make up our conditional life.

The human form of life is an opportunity to get back our original independence.

Our Original Consciousness

To get out of these conditions of life, we must revive our Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or God consciousness. Kṛṣṇa means the Supreme Lord. God consciousness, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is our original consciousness. Just as it is natural to remember our father in this life, it is natural to remember our original father. But we forget the supreme father, Kṛṣṇa, and we want to live independently to enjoy life according to our whims.

That is so-called independence. But by such independence we are never happy, so for this illusory happiness we transmigrate from one body to another. Each type of body has a particular facility for happiness. We want to fly in the sky. But because we are human beings, we have no wings and cannot fly. But the birds, although they are lower animals, can easily fly. If you analyze you’ll see that every type of body has a particular facility that others don’t. But we want all facilities of life. That is our inclination. For example, modern scientists are trying to go to other planets, but they’re conditioned, so they cannot go. There are millions and trillions of planets before us—the sun, the moon, Venus, Mars. Sometimes we wish, “How can I go there.” But because we are conditioned and not independent, we cannot go.

Originally, because we are spirit soul, we were free to go anywhere. For example, Nārada Muni moves everywhere; he can go to any planet he likes. And there is a planet within this universe called Siddhaloka. The inhabitants of Siddhaloka can fly from one planet to another without an airplane. Even hatha-yogis who have practiced can go from anywhere to anyplace. They sit down in one place and immediately transfer to another place. They can take a dip in some river near here and can come out in some river in India. They dip here and they rise there. These are yogic powers.

We have immense independence, but we are now conditioned by this body. Therefore the human form of life is an opportunity to get back our original independence. That is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is freedom.

Two Kinds of Material Body

We have our spiritual body within the material body. That is our real identification. Now we are covered by two kinds of material body. One is called the subtle body and the other is called the gross body. The subtle body is made of mind, intelligence, and false ego, and the gross body is made of earth, water, fire, air, and ether. Generally we can see the gross body; we cannot see the subtle body. I know that you have your mind. I know that you have intelligence. You know that I have a mind and intelligence. But I cannot see your mind, I cannot see your intelligence, I cannot see your determination, I cannot see your thoughts, feelings, and will. You see my gross body made of earth, water, air, and fire, and I can see your gross body. And when your gross body is changed and you are carried away by the subtle body, that is called death.

We say, “Oh, my father has gone away.”

“How do you see that your father has gone away? The body is lying here.”

But actually the father has gone away by means of the subtle body. Something similar happens at night. I am sleeping in a nice apartment, but my subtle body takes me away to the top of a mountain. Sometimes I am falling from a mountain. My gross body is sleeping in a nice, comfortable apartment, but the subtle body carries me. We have daily experience of this.

Similarly, death means we change the gross body. For example, you have your shirt and coat, and you may change the coat but keep the shirt. Similarly, we keep our subtle body and give up the gross body; that is called death. And by the laws of nature the subtle body carries us into the womb of another mother. Then we develop another gross body with materials supplied by the mother. And when the body is prepared, we come out of the womb to work again with our subtle and gross bodies.

Bhāgavata-dharma means that we have to transcend both the gross and subtle bodies and come to the spiritual body. It is very scientific. And as soon as we come to our real, spiritual body, being freed from the gross and subtle bodies, then we actually feel happiness and independence.

The process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the highest benediction for human society because it is trying to bring the human being to the platform of the spiritual body—transcending the gross and subtle material bodies. That is the highest perfection. Human life is meant for coming to that platform, the spiritual platform, transcending the gross and subtle material bodily concept of life.

That perfection is possible, and it has been made easy in this age. Kali-yuga, the current age, is not a very good time. Simply disagreement, fighting, quarreling, misunderstanding. This age is full of all these. Therefore to come to the spiritual platform is very difficult in this age. Formerly, it was not so difficult. People were very easily trained by the Vedic process. But now people are not interested. They're simply interested in the gross body or, for one a little advanced, the subtle body. But they have no information of the spiritual body. Although education has progressed, there is no education about the spiritual body. Education is simply concerned with the gross and subtle material bodies. Therefore this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is very important. Those who have taken to it are very, very fortunate.

"I Am Wasting My Valuable Life"

I shall explain a song sung by Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, one of our predecessor *ācāryas,* or teachers. His songs are accepted in our Vaiṣṇava society as Vedic truth. He has written in simple Bengali language, but it contains the Vedic truth. He has written many songs. One of them begins *hari hari biphale janama goṅāinu:* "My dear Lord, I am simply wasting my valuable life."

Narottama Dāsa is speaking for people in general. Although we have been born as human beings, we do not know how to use human life. We are just like animals. The animal eats; we simply make arrangements to eat unnaturally. That is our advancement. In the animal kingdom every animal has a particular type of food. A tiger eats flesh and blood, but if you give the tiger nice oranges or grapes, he'll not touch them, because those are not his food. Similarly, a hog eats stool. If you give the hog nice *halava,* it will not touch it. You see? Every animal has a particular type of food.

Similarly, we human beings have our type of food. What is that? Fruits, milk, grains, vegetables. Our teeth are made for such foods. If you take a fruit, you can easily cut it into pieces with your teeth. If you take a piece of flesh, it will be difficult to cut with these teeth. But a tiger has a particular type of teeth, and he can immediately cut flesh into pieces.

We are advancing in education, but we do not even study our teeth. We simply go to the dentist, that's all. This is our advancement of civilization. The tiger never goes to the dentist. Its teeth are so strong that immediately it can tear raw meat into pieces. But it doesn't require a dentist, because it doesn't eat anything unnatural for it. We eat anything; therefore we require the help of a dentist.

The human being has a particular type of business. That business is to study and discuss the *bhāgavata* life. That is our natural business. We should try to understand Bhagavān, God. The relationship between Bhagavān and the *bhakta,* or devotee, is called *bhāgavata-dharma.* The business of human life is very easy: Simply hear about Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is Bhagavān, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and we are part of Kṛṣṇa.

Suppose I have forgotten my home. I left my home a long time ago and have forgotten my father. So if somebody reminds me, "Do you know such-and-such gentleman? He is your father. You were playing in such a way, your father was helping you . . ." In this way, if he simply talks of my father, I will remember my home. Similarly, we have forgotten our relationship with Kṛṣṇa. If we simply hear about Him, then we will remember. It is a simple process. We simply have to hear about Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is situated in everyone's

What Is the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement?

Founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) carries on a great ancient tradition rooted in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* the teachings Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke five millennia ago. The *Gītā* and the other Vedic scriptures declare Kṛṣṇa to be the original person, God Himself, who appears periodically in this world to liberate all living beings.

Only five hundred years ago, Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach the most sublime and effective means of meditation for the present day: the chanting of the names of God, especially as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Today members of ISKCON continue Lord Caitanya's movement by distributing the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the world.

Pronunciation

We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in b**u**t, long **ā** like the **a** in f**a**r (and held twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in ev**a**de, long **ī** like the **i** in p**i**que. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **ri**m, and **c** like the **ch** in **ch**air. Pronounce consonants like **ch, jh,** and **dh** as in staun**ch-h**eart, hed**ge-h**og, and re**d-h**ot. Pronounce **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh.** So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

Spiritual Names

ISKCON members receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or his great devotees, combined with Dāsa, for men, or Dāsī, for women, both of which mean "servant." For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

heart, and we have forgotten Kṛṣṇa, our supreme father, on account of material contamination.

So hear about Kṛṣṇa attentively. You are kindly doing that now. It is a very good opportunity. I thank you very much. You are all young boys and girls, but you are very fortunate. Your fathers and grandfathers do not come here. But you have come because you are fortunate. Continue this. Just try to hear about Kṛṣṇa. Your life will be successful. You haven't got to do anything else. It doesn't require that you become an M.A. or a Ph.D. No. God has given you two ears, and if you kindly submissively hear from the realized souls, then your life will be successful.

The Power of Hearing

Actually, that is happening. All these boys and girls have come to me in different parts of the world simply by hearing. I have not bribed them; I have no money. They are sacrificing everything for me. Why? Simply because they have heard from me, that's all. Hearing is so strong. And they are educated boys and girls, university graduates. I'm not fooling them. But as they're hearing, they're understanding the gravity of this movement and gradually they're becoming convinced and firmly situated in the practice. This is called *bhāgavata-dharma.*

We are giving everyone the chance to hear about Kṛṣṇa. Of course in your country it is new. But in my country, India—although India is fallen in so many ways—if there is a *bhāgavata* discourse, throngs of people will attend. We have held *bhāgavata* discourses in Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi, Madras, Jaipur—big, big cities. In Calcutta and Bombay thirty thousand people attended daily for ten days. Although there is propaganda in India to forget Kṛṣṇa consciousness, how can the people forget? They're born in the land where Kṛṣṇa appeared. They cannot forget. They have been given the opportunity of birth in India due to past pious activities.

But Kṛṣṇa is for everyone. It is not that Kṛṣṇa is only for Indians or Hindus. No. Kṛṣṇa is for everyone. In your country this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement started in 1966 in New York, and gradually we are increasing the number of students and branches. So kindly continue this habit: Simply hear about Kṛṣṇa. Then Kṛṣṇa will help you. He is within your heart. He'll help you in every way.

Kṛṣṇa says, "If anyone is very serious and sincere, and constantly engaged in My devotional service, I give him intelligence." Kṛṣṇa is within everyone. Kṛṣṇa is within your heart—in my heart, your heart, everyone's heart. So He gives you intelligence. What kind of intelligence? The intelligence to go back home, back to Godhead.

These *bhāgavata-dharma* discourses are a constant call: "My dear sir, please get up, please get up." *Jīva jāgo jīva jāgo gauracandra bole.* This is the message of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He says, "My dear *jīva,* living being, kindly get up. This is the opportunity."

Deliverance by The Holy Name

I was explaining Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura's song. Let me finish it. He says:

hari hari biphale janama goṅāinu
manuṣya-janama pāiyā
rādhā-kṛṣṇa nā bhajiyā
jāniyā śuniyā biṣa khāinu

"My dear Lord, I received this valuable human form of life, but I have wasted it for nothing. This life is meant for understanding Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, but I did not do so. Therefore I have knowingly taken poison." Sometimes a person takes poison to commit suicide. He knows that as soon as he'll take the poison he'll die. Similarly, one who is not taking to Kṛṣṇa consciousness is drinking poison. This life is the opportunity to become Kṛṣṇa conscious. And if you don't use this opportunity, that means knowingly drinking poison.

Golokera prema-dhana hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana. Just as we receive

(*please turn to page 31*)

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Ācārya—a spiritual master who teaches by example.

Balarāma—Lord Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who acts in the role of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother.

Battle of Kurukshetra—an epic battle for rule of the world, fought five thousand years ago.

Bhagavad-gītā—the sacred book in which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the essence of knowledge to His friend and disciple Arjuna.

Bhakti—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Bhakti-yoga—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.

Darśana—"viewing," audience with a deity or saintly person.

Dharma—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).

Godhead—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.

Gurukula—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally "the place of the guru").

Hare Kṛṣṇa—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

ISKCON—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Japa—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.

Kali-yuga—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.

Karma—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.

Kīrtana—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).

Kṛṣṇa—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendental form (see "Godhead").

Mahābhārata—the epic history of ancient India, a history in which the *Bhagavad-gītā* appears as the most important and well-known text.

Māyā—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.

Māyāvādī—one who regards the Abs ultimately impersonal.

Modes of nature—the three qualities (goo and ignorance) that hold sway over all action n the material world.

Nityānanda—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Prasādam—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion (literally "mercy").

Purāṇas—Vedic histories.

Rādhārāṇī—Lord Kṛṣṇa's consort and pleasure potency.

Rathayātrā—"chariot festival": a festival in which the form of Kṛṣṇa is borne in procession on a large canopy-topped chariot or float, especially the festival originating in Puri, India, for Jagannātha (Lord Kṛṣṇa, "the Lord of the universe").

Sannyāsa—the renounced life of a man who relinquishes home to dedicate himself fully to the Supreme.

Śrī—an honorific meaning "opulent" (similarly: Śrīla, Śrīmad, Śrīmān, Śrīmatī).

Śrīla Prabhupāda—His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam—the most important of the eighteen *Purāṇas,* which tells of the nature and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees.

Supersoul—the form of the Lord who resides in every heart along with the individual soul.

Upaniṣads—the 108 essential philosophical treatises that appear within the *Vedas.*

Vaiṣṇava—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).

Varṇāśrama—the Vedic social system. It organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*). The members of the four *varṇas* are the *brāhmaṇas* (intellectuals and priests), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *śūdras* (laborers and artisans). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacārīs* (celibate students), *gṛhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).

Vedas—the hymns of knowledge revealed by the Lord Himself at the beginning of creation.

Vedic—pertaining to the culture in which the *Vedas* and related scriptures guide all aspects of human life.

Viṣṇu—any form of the Personality of Godhead (see "Godhead"); the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.

Vṛndāvana—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.

When Swami Met Sally

The kindness of strangers played a pivotal role in ISKCON's pre-history.

by Satyarāja Dāsa

photos by Akhilānanda Dāsa
(Alfred F. Fitch)

LAST YEAR I had the good fortune to meet Gopal and Sally Agarwal, an elderly couple who played a significant role in ISKCON's origins. They are forever etched in the devotees' collective memory as two of the Western world's earliest recipients of Śrīla Prabhupāda's mercy. It was the Agarwals who hosted him in the fall of 1965, before ISKCON was even nominally born, giving him shelter, hospitality, friendship, and love. Indeed, for one month their home served as Prabhupāda's earliest refuge outside India.

As Śrīla Prabhupāda acquainted himself with the Agarwal home in Butler, in western Pennsylvania, he saw a typically quiet American town nestled in the hills, a town that has changed little since his brief visit those many years ago.

Last year, Nitāi Dāsa, a grand-disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda's, organized a celebration in Butler to commemorate Prabhupāda's time there. Appropriately, the event was convened at the Butler Cubs Club, at 113 South McKean Street, the YMCA that served as Prabhupāda's sleeping quarters during his days with the Agarwals. In fact, the Agarwals

were the guests of honor at the event. Sally addressed the audience of largely ISKCON devotees, including Rādhānātha Swami, Varṣāṇā Swami, and Candraśekhara Swami. Dr. Allen Larson gave the keynote speech. Now a retired professor of philosophy at Slippery Rock College, in Butler, in 1965 he invited Prabhupāda for his first college lecture in the West.

One of the lasting fruits of the Butler event, at least for me, was making contact with Sally and Gopal, charming and good-hearted people with unique and profound memories of Śrīla Prabhupāda. For several months afterward, we kept in touch by phone and email, and they shared many wonderful stories about their time with my spiritual master. Although they never became devotees in the usual sense of the word, Prabhupāda engulfed their consciousness, changing their lives and perceptions in innumerable ways. A detailed account of their interaction with Kṛṣṇa's pure devotee appears in Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami's *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta,* and this short article might serve as an addendum to that story.

The Mission Begins

A small occurrence can lead to a monumental event. A dry seed in hand may look insignificant, but inside is a plant-to-be. So it was when a businessman from Agra—Mathura Prasad Agarwal—offered a venerable and exceptional monk, whom the world would eventually know as His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, sponsorship in the Western world. As Śrīla Prabhupāda undoubtedly told Mathura Prasad at the time, he had been instructed by his spiritual master to spread the timeless message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness—the science of God realization—worldwide. The pious businessman could thus surmise that helping this particular sadhu would mean assisting him on his journey to the West; it would be the only assistance Prabhupāda would need or want from him. Prabhupāda would soon travel abroad and change religious history by founding the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

ISKCON members know the story well: After an arduous journey by ship, landing first in Boston harbor and then in New York, Prabhupāda emerged in the Western world, bringing centuries of tradition and the precious gem of Vedic knowledge for all who would have it. He was required by law to meet and stay with his sponsors, Mathura Prasad's son Gopal and daughter-in-law Sally. The Agarwals held the legal documents enabling Prabhupāda to enter America. They offered him

Sally Agarwal recalls her time with Śrīla Prabhupāda during his stay with her family in Butler, Pennsylvania, in 1965.

their home in Butler, Pennsylvania, as his first foreign sanctuary.

It was 1965, and the couple was in their mid-30s, married only six years earlier. Sally, a Caucasian Methodist born in Pittsburgh, was just getting to know her husband's Indian culture. She was excited that a real-life swami would be staying in their home.

As Sally tells it, the Agarwals received Prabhupāda's initial letter in early September, and he included a picture so that they might recognize him when he arrived.

"Using this picture," relates Sally, "my husband met him in Pittsburgh, since he was coming in on the Greyhound bus from New York City. Gopal had worked it out with Traveler's Aid to get him to Pennsylvania. So we met him. It was about midnight when they reached Butler, and, poor fellow, he was tired from his constant journeying, and the only place we could set up for him was our couch."

There wasn't much of an alternative. The Agarwal residence, a small townhouse apartment, consisted of few rooms, with two upstairs bedrooms occupied by the two children, Kamla Kumari (their three-year-old daughter) and Brij Kumar (their newborn son). After Prabhupāda left, the couple had two more children, Indu and Maya, born in 1969 and in 1971, respectively.

Since the Agarwal apartment had so little space—and because they didn't want Prabhupāda confined to their couch, night after night—they decided it would be better if he stayed at the YMCA, spending morning, noon, and evening with them until he was ready to call it a day. This was the Butler Cubs Club on South McKean Street, just a few blocks from the Agarwal home.

In a recent conversation with Sally, she told me about those first few weeks with Prabhupāda:

> He was so gentle, accommodating, and kind. I felt like he was Gopal's father—a grandfather around the house, if you know what I mean. He played with Kamla and Brij. He just loved children, even when Brij teethed on his sandals! He just laughed and had a good sense of humor about everything. Sometimes he would tell us of his mission, but he always respected my Methodist background, never trying to convert me or to push his beliefs on us. He wasn't talking about starting a movement or anything like that. But he was serious about distributing his books. He

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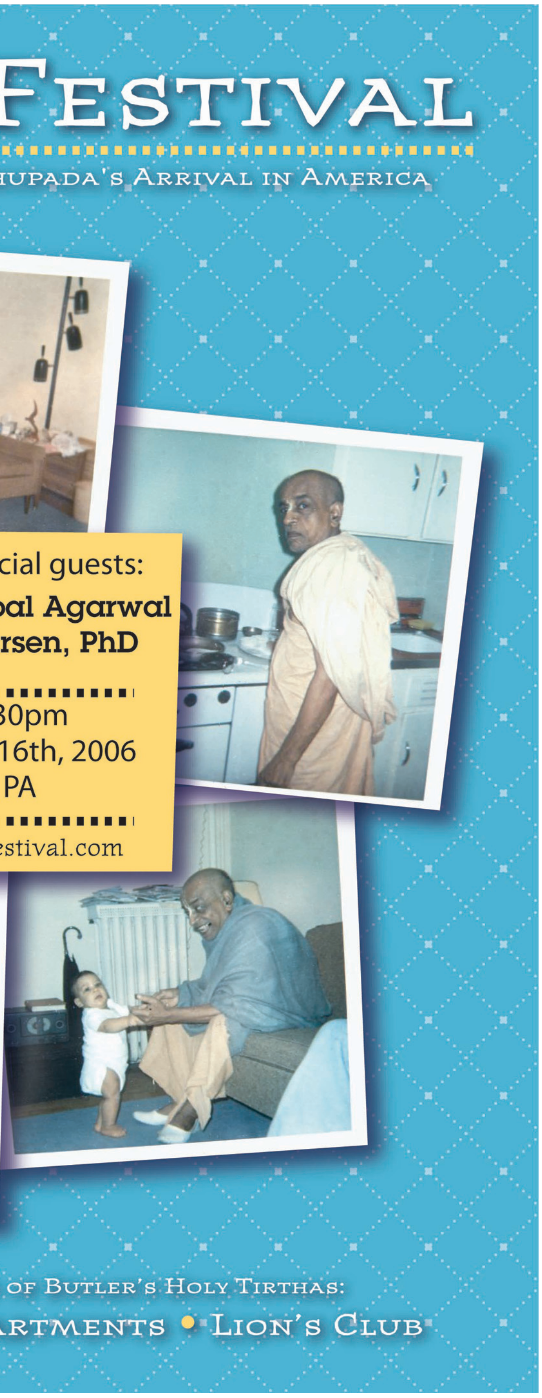
At left: Sally and her daughter, Maya. Above: a poster announcing the Butler festival—photos are of Śrīla Prabhupāda in the Agarwal home. Opposite page, top: Gopal Agarwal.



> had brought them from India, and he saw his life's mission as bringing this profound knowledge to the West, to reveal what he knew in the English language. We came to love his sincerity, his knowledge, and his warmth. I cried when he had to leave Butler.

Sally loves to mention, too, that her baby daughter may have been the first in the West to detect Prabhupāda's holiness: "Once, my three-year-old, Kamla, seeing Swamiji in the robes of a holy man, called him 'Swami Jesus.' He merely smiled and said, 'And a child shall lead them.'"

A Swami in Butler

Soon after Prabhupāda arrived, Sally hurried off to the local newspapers, and shortly thereafter a feature article appeared in the *Butler Eagle:* "In fluent English, Devotee of Hindu Cult Explains Commission to Visit the West." A photographer had come to the Agarwals' apartment and had taken a picture of Śrīla Prabhupāda standing in the living room, holding an open volume of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* The caption read, "Ambassador of Bhakti-yoga."

The article began:

> A slight brown man in faded orange drapes and wearing white bathing shoes stepped out of a compact car yesterday and into the Butler YMCA to attend a meeting. He is A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swamiji, a messenger from India to the peoples of the West.

The article quoted Prabhupāda as follows:

> "My mission is to revive people's God consciousness," says the Swamiji. "God is the Father of all living beings, in thousands of different forms," he explains. "Human life is a stage of perfection in evolution; if we miss the message, back we go through the process again. . . ." If Americans would give more attention to their spiritual life, they would be much happier, he says.

At Prabhupāda's request, Gopal held a kind of open house in his apartment every night from six to nine. The family would invite friends and neighbors to hear "the Swami" talk about exotic India, and about Vedic philosophy and mysticism. The Agarwals knew many intellectuals, and people came from neighboring towns just to hear him speak.

Srimad Bhagavatam
KRSNA

Lecturing to large groups was clearly among his many talents. But this was only his formal persona. The Agarwals saw another side, too, one that was quaint and friendly, down-home and endearing. For example, Gopal tells the story of how Prabhupāda would cook lunch for them daily, demonstrating how to prepare meals in authentic Vaiṣṇava style.

He had the curiosity and wonder of a child, too, says Sally: "He was fascinated by laundry machines, by washers and dryers, and the frozen vegetables in the freezer. Apparently, these were not common things in India, and he talked about them for hours. He always talked about modern developments and how they could be used in God's service."

At times, Prabhupāda's presence in the Agarwal home led to minor challenges. Sally tells the story of when he washed his clothes in their upstairs bathroom:

"Oh man! I didn't know it at the time, but he washed his two simple cloths every night. You see, he only owned two monk garments at the time, and every day he'd wash them. He would be busy in the bathroom sink upstairs, drenching the bathroom floor for the longest time—slop, slop, slop. Gopal had to go up there one day and explain to him that you can't do that in America, you have to be careful with water. In India the floors are cement, mud, or clay, and so it doesn't matter if you slop it up. But in our country, when the bathroom is on the second floor, it definitely matters! And then he spread his outfit, his two pieces of cloth, on the grass just outside our apartment complex, which was quite a sight in our local neighborhood.”

Still, Sally and Gopal deeply appreciated Prabhupāda's presence in their home, and, increasingly, so did many others in the Butler community.

“*When the people would come, they were always smoking . . . , but he would say, ‘Think nothing of it.’*”

Sally reminisces in the *Līlāmṛta* about her own pleasant interactions with him:

> He was the easiest guest I have had in my life, because when I couldn't spend time with him he chanted, and I knew he was perfectly happy. When I couldn't talk to him, he chanted. He was so easy, though, because I knew he was never bored. I never felt any pressure or tension about having him. He was so easy that when I had to take care of the children he would just chant. It was so great. When I had to do things, he would just be happy chanting. He was a very good guest. When the people would come, they were always smoking cigarettes, but he would say, “Pay no attention. Think nothing of it.” That's what he said. “Think nothing of it.” Because he knew we were different. I didn't smoke in front of him. I knew I wasn't supposed to smoke in front of Gopal's father, so I sort of considered him the same. He didn't make any problems for anybody.

The First Preaching In the West

Prabhupāda spoke to various groups in the Butler community, including the Lions Club, where he received a formal document proclaiming “Be it known that A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami was a guest at the Lions Club of Butler, Pa., and as an expression of appreciation for services rendered, the Club tenders this acknowledgment.”

He also gave a talk at the YMCA and at St. Fidelis Seminary College in nearby Herman.

Professor Allen Larsen, then chairman of the philosophy department at Slippery Rock State College, also invited Prabhupāda to lecture. A hundred students from three of his classes came to hear. Prabhupāda appeared before them with his distinct otherworldly glow and full *sannyāsī* garb—an uncommon sight in the West, and even more uncommon in Butler. He sat down and chanted the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra.* Then he stood and spoke—a formal but basic lecture on Kṛṣṇa consciousness—and answered questions from the audience.

Professor Larsen remembers that the program lasted about an hour and forty-five minutes. At the celebration in Butler last year, he recalled:

> When I first met him, he told me he had come to the U.S.A. to translate the Vedic scriptures, and as far as I knew that was his only aim of being here. We had time to talk on the campus. It was a nice day, and he drew up his legs under him and sat in what you call a lotus position. He remarked that trees should be nut and fruit trees. They weren't—they were just flowering trees, just for show, and I certainly agreed with that.
>
> During our lapses in conversation he would use his prayer beads and recite a Kṛṣṇa prayer which was hardly audible to me. Although I've forgotten many of the details of his talk, it was clear to me that he was a holy man. This just radiated out of his being. It was primarily his composure, his peacefulness, that led me to that conclusion. I had no idea that this quiet man would become a leader of a significant religious movement here and abroad. After all these years, that impression of a holy man has stayed with me.

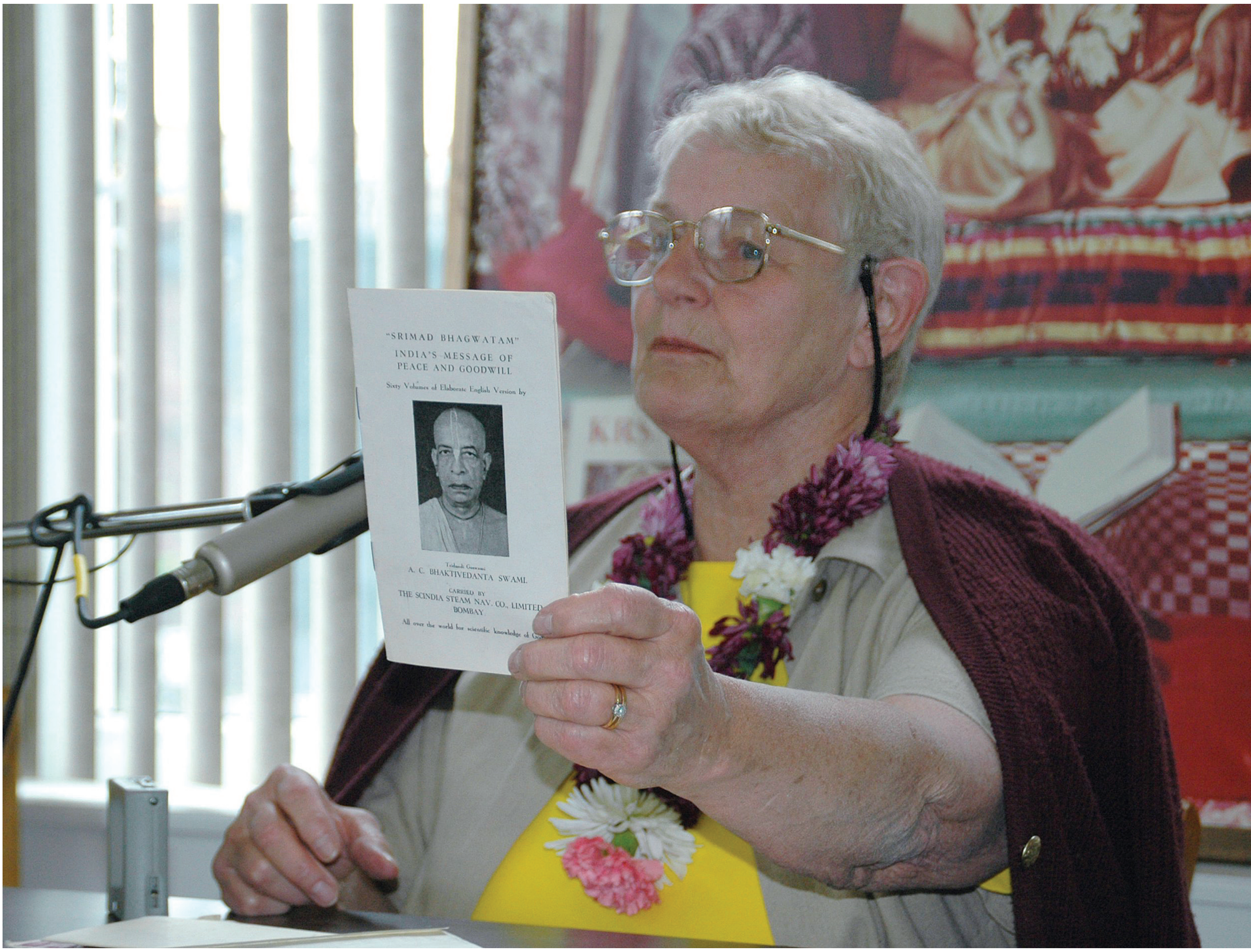
The lectures in Pennsylvania were a testing ground, Prabhupāda's first indications of how his message would be received in America. The reception was promising. Sally and her husband encouraged him to repeat this formula elsewhere, and Professor Larsen expressed deep satisfaction with having hosted a genuine Indian sadhu.

The Movement Expands

After a month, Prabhupāda left Sally and Gopal's little hamlet, and the seeds of his mission had been sown. While there, he gained experience with American audiences. He saw that people were interested in his books and message, and also that he could endear himself to foreign people. Sally, especially, “came to love the Swami,” as she puts it.

In New York he struggled for almost six months, subjected to a bitterly cold New York winter, the theft of his simple belongings, and the abuse of a drug-crazed roommate. Yet his determination to bring about a spiritual revolution would soon bear fruit.

All the while he kept in touch with Sally and Gopal by letter. Especially Sally, since she was the more gregarious of the two, always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Sally displays a pamphlet that Śrīla Prabhupāda left with her advertising his Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam *translation.*

ready to engage in conversation and personal exchange. Prabhupāda's correspondence with Sally is a matter of public record, and it is heartening to see his concern for her in those letters.

In May of 1966, Śrīla Prabhupāda, with the help of just two followers, rented a storefront in New York's Lower East Side, previously a novelty shop with the name "Matchless Gifts." Early visitors to Śrīla Prabhupāda's new center were struck by the prophetic name. In July of 1966, he incorporated his institution, ISKCON.

Prabhupāda always kept in touch with Sally. In fact, Sally notes that the "celebrity" of being one of Prabhupāda's first contacts in the West is downright fun.

"Our time with Swami broadened my mind a lot," she says, "because I'm open to that kind of thing. I mean, it's been a lot of fun. Maya, my daughter, was in the Dallas airport a couple of years ago when she was approached by a Hare Kṛṣṇa selling the books, asking for a donation. And of course she said that she was Sally Agarwal's daughter—you could imagine that devotee's response. There was another occasion: One day Maya and I were in Madrid and there was a Hare Kṛṣṇa group chanting right near us. But this time, we didn't tell them who we were—we didn't want all the commotion. But it's been fun; it's been a lot of fun."

As influential advertising mogul Bruce Barton famously said, "Sometimes when I consider what tremendous consequences come from little things, I am tempted to think that there are no little things." Mathura Prasad's pious gesture to Kṛṣṇa's most important representative, and the kindness that both Gopal and Sally subsequently showed him in Butler, are certainly not "little things." Indeed, the consequences of these gracious acts proved to be monumental.

Satyarāja Dāsa, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, is a BTG associate editor. He has written over twenty books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness and lives near New York City.

Discover Kṛṣṇa’s law of attraction, the real power behind the latest rage in the self-improvement marketplace.

The Secr Behind “The Secret”

by Arcana Siddhī Devī Dāsī

THE SECRET, a recently released book and DVD by Rhonda Byrne, is getting a lot of attention as sales soar. The author claims that if we apply the principles she lays out, we can achieve whatever we desire. People from all walks of life are excitedly latching on to her ideas.

In the beginning of the DVD, ancient-looking texts in a medieval ambiance invite us to discover secret knowledge. Flickering torchlights and pulsating music prelude the disclosure of the secret to getting that new BMW. Byrne then tells us about the universal law of attraction, or "like attracts like." By understanding this law and using it to our advantage, we can obtain whatever we want. Although a host of predecessor authors have been saying the same thing for the past two centuries, Byrne's savvy marketing strategies have put old wine in a new bottle. She's cashing in on people's yearning to find a process that will lead them to perfect happiness.

the Secret
Rhonda Byrne

To illustrate the law of attraction, scenes from the DVD include a young woman longingly looking at an expensive necklace through a jewelry store window. In the next scene her efforts are rewarded as her boyfriend garlands her with the same necklace that captivated her senses. In another scene, a young man sits in his living-room chair vividly imagining himself driving the car of his dreams. Predictably, in the following scene a BMW sits parked in his driveway.

The next scene shows the flipside to the law of attraction. A young man chains his bicycle to a pole. Noticeably anxious about the safety of his bike, he walks away to his destination. When he returns, his bike is gone.

Following these opening fictitious scenes are real-life testimonials from successful people verifying the validity of the law of attraction in their own lives. Jack Canfield, the author of a number of best-selling books, relates how he attracted into his life an abundance of money and success when he started to focus on what he wanted. An entrepreneur shares his story of cutting out a picture of his dream house from a magazine and putting it on his "vision board." Five years later when he is moving into his new house, his son asks what is inside a particular box. The entrepreneur opens it to reveal his vision board. Tears well up in his eyes as he looks at the board and sees that he is moving into the same house he had cut out of the magazine five years earlier.

When his young son asks why he is crying, he replies that he has finally understood the law of attraction: ask-believe-receive. These seductive scenes suggest that by our desires alone we can get everything we want. The universe is our perpetual order supplier, and all we have to do is focus on what we want and avoid thinking about what we don't want. When asked why this law doesn't work for everyone, one of the film's pundits answers that people give up too early. They might be on the brink of obtaining their goal, but they stop.

Is Desire Enough?

In the ancient Vedic literature we find a much more comprehensive answer to why some people achieve their desires and others don't. Everyone in the material field of activities is acting according to the reactions of their past deeds. As you sow, so you shall reap. What *The Secret* fails to acknowledge or understand is our accountability as souls for things we have done not only in this life but in our past lives as well. The universal law of karma dictates that everything we do has a reaction, which may be good or bad, depending on the quality of the act. Good deeds yield good results such as fame and fortune. Bad deeds produce unwanted material situations such as poverty, infamy, and disease.

Successful people, Oprah Winfrey, for example, endorse *The Secret* by saying that they have used the law of attraction most of their lives. But according to the Vedic view, they're merely drawing from a bank account of previous good deeds. Without remembering their past lives, such people think that all they have to do is desire and their wish will be fulfilled. So naturally they conclude that others should be able to get the same result by changing how they think.

But can people choose to change the way they think? To some extent, yes. Our past actions influence our current thoughts, but our freely chosen responses to our present situation—including our present thoughts and attitudes—reformat our thoughts, and our thoughts influence our future. Although people may be inclined toward negative thoughts, hearing something like *The Secret* might inspire them to change the way they think. Our thoughts define our character and influence how we move in this world. Ultimately, at the time of death our thoughts carry us to our next destination—that's how important and powerful they are.

At the time of death our thoughts carry us to our next destination—that's how important and powerful they are.

Truly Positive Thinking

Since we can change the way we think, we should start thinking and desiring spiritually, for permanent results. *The Secret* emphasizes using the law of attraction for material acquisition, good health, and maybe some altruism. The more mature perspective is to see that the real purpose of the law attraction, like all of God's laws, is to dispel our material consciousness and revive our original spiritual nature. This means using our thoughts and desires to become free of material thoughts and desires. That may sound unattractive to the entrepreneur who wants a $20 million house or the musician looking for her latest CD to hit the top of the charts. But becoming free of material desire doesn't mean giving up desire; it means desiring things for our and others' eternal benefit.

In the spiritual dimension, where all desires are for the Lord's service and pleasure, desires are fulfilled instantaneously. The desire for things separate from the Lord's service pollutes our consciousness and causes us to suffer and remain hostage to the material energy.

As aspiring devotees of the Lord, we can use the law of attraction to serve Kṛṣṇa in this world by desiring to transform both our consciousness and that of others. Śrīla Prabhupāda exemplified how Kṛṣṇa's law of attraction works in the material realm for spiritual attainment. Although he landed in New York City with no money or help, one acquaintance in New York recalled, "He seemed to know that he would have temples filled up with devotees. He would look out and say, 'I am not a poor man. I am rich. There are temples and books. They are existing, they are there, but the time is separating us from them.'"

When walking in the city, he would look at the big buildings and imagine that some day they could be used in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Prabhupāda was a pure devotee completely free of karma; he was under the direct protection of the Lord. Because his desires were one with Kṛṣṇa's desires, within a short time of starting his ISKCON society he had many temples filled with devotees and many books being distributed all over the world.

Why Doesn't Kṛṣṇa Fulfill All Desires?

Every desire is a kind of prayer, because Kṛṣṇa is in our heart, listening. Out of love for us He has expanded Himself into the hearts of all living beings. He fulfills our desires throughout our stay in the material world.

But Kṛṣṇa doesn't give us whatever we want, because His goal is to guide us back to our eternal home. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* tells us that whether we are full of desires or have no desires, we should approach Kṛṣṇa. And, for aspiring devotees at least, if our desires will help us to advance spiritually, then Kṛṣṇa will gladly fulfill them. But He won't fulfill our desires if the result will hinder our spiritual progress. Rather, He'll help us give up harmful desires by giving us a taste of spiritual truth.

Aspiring transcendentalists receive direct help from the Lord, and whatever happens is for their highest good, as illustrated in the following story.

Sanātana Gosvāmī, a prominent disciple of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, lived under a tree as a renunciant. Once, a poor *brāhmaṇa* heard that Sanātana possessed a stone that could turn anything it touched into gold. The *brāhmaṇa* eagerly went to ask Sanātana for the stone. Without the least hesitancy Sanātana told the *brāhmaṇa* he could have the stone; it was in a rubbish heap nearby. The elated *brāhmaṇa* found the stone but, being intelligent, began to consider the situation. Why would Sanātana discard something so valuable unless he had something better? When he asked Sanātana about it, Sanātana said that he would give him the most valuable thing but first the *brāhmaṇa* would have to throw the magical stone into the river. To discard the stone was a test for the *brāhmaṇa,* but after some deliberation he complied with Sanātana's condition, and Sanātana gave him the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

The effects of chanting this mantra are unlimited; one achieves so much more than a necklace or BMW. Serious chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa brings freedom from all material suffering—no more birth, death, disease, or old age. And it gives realization of our eternal spiritual identity, full of unlimited joy and knowledge. People who understand their real spiritual nature and relationship with the Lord become completely satisfied. Their only desire is service to the Lord.

Desires fulfilled in this material plane of existence are temporary—here today and gone tomorrow. Material acquisitions generally fuel our desire for more things rather than bringing a sense of happiness and fulfillment. The *brāhmaṇa* made an intelligent decision and received the complete secret.

The Best Secret of All

In the Ninth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā,* Lord Kṛṣṇa reveals to Arjuna—and ultimately to anyone fortunate enough to read His words—the most secret of all secrets. The essence of this chapter is in the final verse, where the Lord gives Arjuna four confidential instructions: always think of Him, become His devotee, worship Him, and bow down before Him. These four practices attract Kṛṣṇa. He has designed all of nature's laws to help us souls find our way back to our eternal home. When we use the law of attraction for material purposes, it keeps us in the material realm of repeated birth and death. When we use the law to be absorbed in thoughts of Kṛṣṇa, then surely we will go to Him. The great devotee Queen Kuntī applies the law of attraction in an ideal way when she offers this prayer to Kṛṣṇa: "O Lord of Madhu, as the Ganges forever flows to the sea without hindrance, let my attraction be constantly drawn unto You without being diverted to anyone else." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.8.42) ❁

Arcana Siddhī Devī Dāsī was initiated by Prabhupāda in 1976. She lives with her husband and son in Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, where she works as a family therapist.

LETTERS

(*continued from page 5*)

actually *bhakti,* or devotional service.

The distinction is important because untrained householders tend to substitute *gauṇa-dharma* for *bhakti.* The idea that any activity connected with Kṛṣṇa is devotional service is incorrect. It is important to know the difference between *gauṇa-dharma,* which prepares the field for *bhakti,* and actual *bhakti.* For example, when a devotee brushes his or her teeth it is *gauṇa-dharma,* because the devotee is taking care of the body, which is used in Kṛṣṇa's service. Some activities that are done with a child—for example, hearing, chanting, and so on—are *bhakti.* However, some activities are *gauṇa* (material preparation), not *bhakti.*

Dayānanda Dāsa
New York, New York

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Calendar

This calendar is calculated for Māyāpur, West Bengal, India. The dates, derived from a lunar calendar, may vary by one day for other locations. For the exact dates for your area, go to www.krishna.com/calendar.

Because the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement comes in disciplic line from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the calendar includes not only dates relevant to all followers of the Vedic tradition but also dates relating to Lord Caitanya's associates and prominent spiritual masters in His disciplic succession.

Radha Kunda

Month of Dāmodara

(October 27–November 24)

30—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa known for his Bengali devotional songs.

NOVEMBER

2—Appearance of Radha Kunda.

5—Ramā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

9—Diwali, the festival of illuminating Kṛṣṇa's temples with lamps. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for details.

11—Govardhana Pūjā, the festival commemorating the worship of Govardhana Hill by the residents of Vṛndāvana and Kṛṣṇa's lifting the hill. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for details.

14—Disappearance anniversary of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Devotees observe this day with personal remembrances of Śrīla Prabhupāda, readings from his biography, and fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

18—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, a great follower of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

21—Utthānā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gaurakiśora Dāsa Bābājī, the spiritual master of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who was Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual master. Fasting till noon.

24—Śrī Kṛṣṇa Rāsa-yātrā. Last day of Dāmodara-vrata and Cāturmāsya.

Month of Keśava

(November 25–December 24)

DECEMBER

5—Utpannā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

20—Mokṣadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Also, the anniversary of the day on which Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā.*

Month of Nārāyaṇa

(December 25–January 22)

27—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the spiritual master of Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

JANUARY

4—Saphalā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

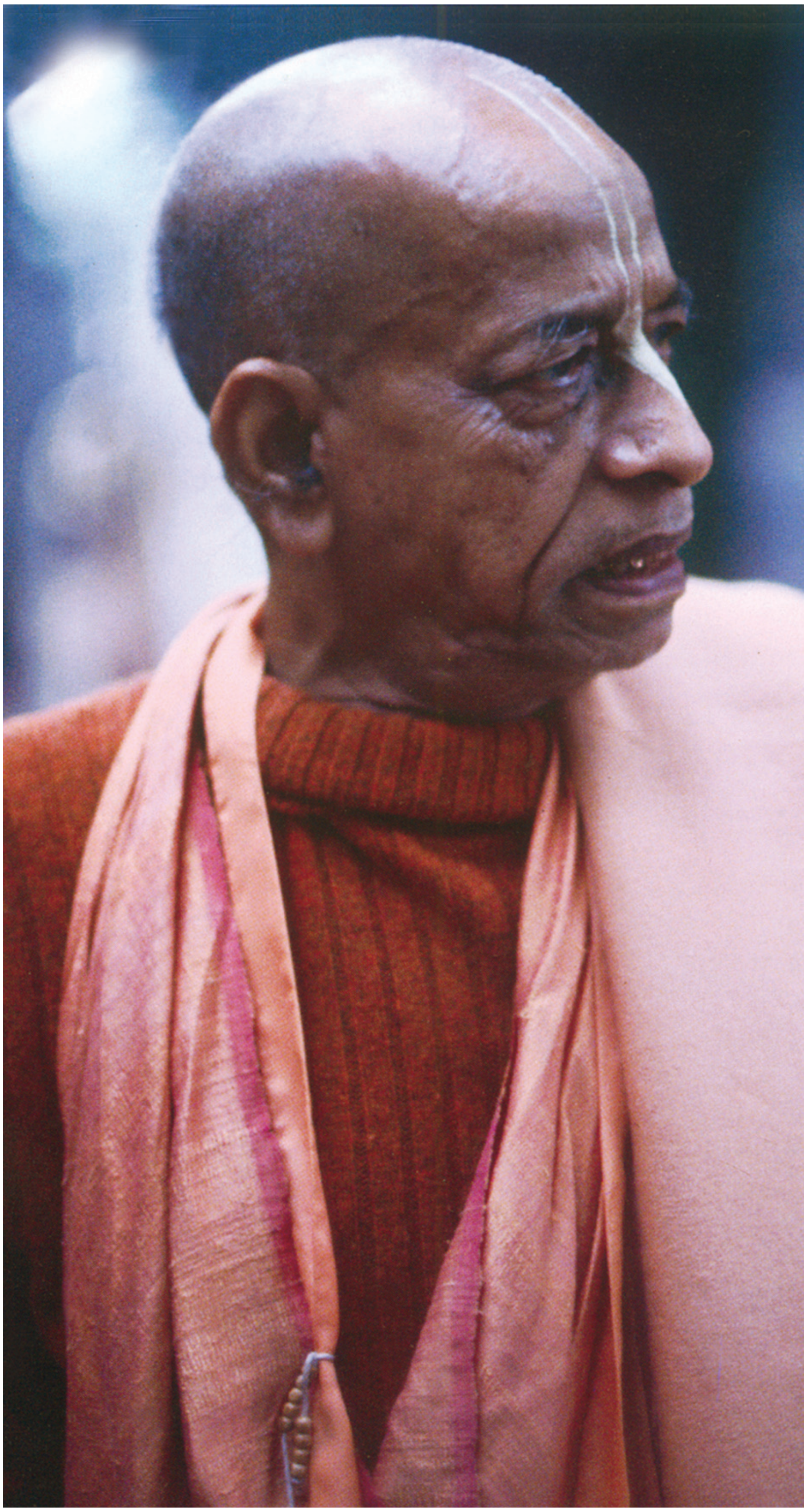
9—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura, a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa known for his Bengali devotional songs.

11—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

19—Putradā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

A Philosophy of Frustration



This exchange between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and an existentialist-socialist priest took place in Los Angeles during December of 1973.

Priest: Now, finally, we're beginning to grasp the real, inner meaning of Christianity and of religion generally: God sharing in the sufferings of man; man learning to live with the inevitability of his pain.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is rascaldom—why should God have to share the sufferings of man?

Priest: That way man can more readily accept suffering as an inseparable part of reality.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Very good priest. People are trying to become happy, and your theory is that they should accept suffering. The very proposition is rascaldom. As spirit souls, part and parcel of the Supreme Spirit, we are naturally trying to minimize suffering and reach His spiritual abode, where suffering is nil. Everyone is trying to be perfectly happy. That is our struggle; that is the meaning of human civilization. We are not submitting to suffering. We don't want suffering. So if you actually believe in God, if you are actually a theist, then why are you talking like a rascal and saying that we must suffer—that even God must suffer?

Priest: Well, I'm what you might call an "atheist-theist."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Atheist-theist? What is this?

Priest: My thinking is that God is essentially our own invention . . . an idea.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You think God is an idea?

Priest: Yes, though quite a necessary one. The idea of a supreme being or a supreme authority is something we have imposed upon ourselves, apparently because we find it consoling, comforting. Most people are ignorant. And so they need God, like Marx said, as their opiate—their assurance of a happy ending, their cure-all and cover-up for hopelessness and frustration.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You say God is just an idea. I say God is not just an idea—God is a fact. Can you prove otherwise?

Priest: Well, as I see it there's no absolute necessity for a supreme being.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But even your Lenin accepted the necessity of a supreme authority. The only thing was, he wanted to become that supreme authority. Lenin wanted to become God.

> ***"Why are you fighting so hard to spread your meaning if ultimately everything has no meaning?"***

Priest: Yes, and he was. For a time he was.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, he could not become God. He was under the laws of God—he died. He died. He could not save himself from death. Therefore, he was not the supreme authority. Lenin was forced to die, so that means there must be some other supreme authority.

Priest: Well, everything is ultimately meaningless, anyway. So ultimately death is meaningless.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Why do you say "meaningless"? If death is meaningless, then why are you so afraid of it? If right now I were coming to kill you, you would be afraid. Why?

Priest: Well, that it's meaningless doesn't mean I can't place some value on it at any given point.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But still, why do you say "meaningless"? Earlier you said you are fighting for "the revolution" and "social change." Why are you fighting so hard to spread your meaning if ultimately everything has no meaning?

Priest: Take numbers. They can be useful, but they have no meaning except what we put into them. Actually they're meaningless.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If everything is actually meaningless, then what you are doing is meaningless.

Priest: Yes, because ultimately everything is meaningless.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then you are less than a rascal. If I called you a rascal I would be giving you some honor. You are working for meaningless things.

Priest: I'm saying everyone can introduce their own meaning, whatever they want.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then why are you trying to recruit so many followers? Why not let people do whatever they want?

Priest: Well, doing whatever you want may include proliferating your own meaning.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, no, no. You've got your own meaning—be satisfied with your own meaning. Don't bother me.

Priest: Part of my meaning may be to bother you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then my meaning may be to beat you over the head with my shoes!

Priest: But take Lenin. No one ever beat him. He simply was not beaten.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, no. Lenin was also beaten—by death. He was beaten, but he would not admit it. He was such a rascal that even though he was being beaten at every moment—even though he was becoming old and diseased, even though he was dying—still he felt, "I am not being beaten." That means he was Rascal Number One. A sane man admits, "Yes, I am being beaten." And a rascal will not admit it.

Priest: Well, we have to look at things existentially. As long as something exists, we can place value on it, but when it ceases to exist there is no remorse, nothing to lament.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If there is nothing to lament, why are you struggling so hard to live a long life and exist as long as possible? Why not simply let yourself die?

Priest: It's like . . . if you have some money in your hand, then as long as you have it you can utilize it, but if you lose it, don't worry. Nothing to worry about. That's how I feel about death.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You may talk big words like that, but in practice you worry. You cry.

Priest: Well, I may just fall short of my philosophy. But the philosophy is ideal.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: These are no arguments. No sane man will accept this philosophy. It is not philosophy—it is simply frustration. But frustration is not life. Frustration is frustration.

Priest: Perhaps frustration is the only reality. That's what Albert Camus felt. He made it one of the main themes in his writings. Frustration, no meaning. And one night he was driving along in his car and reportedly just drove over a cliff. He may have been thinking that if life has no meaning, why not just drive my car over a cliff. Finished himself off.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Madman. He had to be mad, because he did not know who he is—an eternal soul, part and parcel of God. He went mad because he didn't know what is to be known.

Priest: Well, millions and millions of people accept his books as practically gospel.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What is the subject matter?

Priest: The subject of his books is that life is ultimately absurd. There is no real meaning to it. We place our own meanings on it.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then why was he trying to make sense out of the absurdity? If everything is absurd, why write books?

Priest: Yes, that's what Camus seems to have realized, that if everything's absurd, there is no use speaking or writing or even living.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: The thing is, you

(*please turn to page 31*)

BOOK SECTION: ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Referred to as "the ripe fruit of the tree of Vedic literature," *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the most complete and authoritative exposition of Vedic knowledge. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa,* or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. Here we present *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in serialized form, with the original Sanskrit text, transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

LORD VIṢṆU'S SUPREMACY

Having been praised by authorities from higher planets, Lord Viṣṇu explains His position in relation to other living beings, especially Brahmā and Śiva.

CANTO 4: CHAPTER 7

श्रीभगवानुवाच
50 अहं ब्रह्मा च शर्वश्च जगतः कारणं परम्
आत्मेश्वर उपद्रष्टा स्वयन्दृगविशेषणः

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
ahaṁ brahmā ca śarvaś ca
jagataḥ kāraṇaṁ param
ātmeśvara upadraṣṭā
svayan-dṛg aviśeṣaṇaḥ

śrī-bhagavān—Lord Viṣṇu; *uvāca*—said; *aham*—I; *brahmā*—Brahmā; *ca*—and; *śarvaḥ*—Lord Śiva; *ca*—and; *jagataḥ*—of the material manifestation; *kāraṇam*—cause; *param*—supreme; *ātma-īśvaraḥ*—the Supersoul; *upadraṣṭā*—the witness; *svayam-dṛk*—self-sufficient; *aviśeṣaṇaḥ*—there is no difference.

Lord Viṣṇu replied: Brahmā, Śiva, and I are the supreme cause of the material manifestation. I am the Supersoul, the self-sufficient witness. But impersonally there is no difference between Brahmā, Śiva, and Me.

PURPORT: ① Lord Brahmā was born out of the transcendental body of Lord Viṣṇu, and ② Lord Śiva was born out of the body of Brahmā. Lord Viṣṇu, therefore, is the supreme cause. In the *Vedas* also it is stated that in the beginning there was only Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa; there was no Brahmā or Śiva. Similarly, Śaṅkarācārya confirmed this: *nārāyaṇaḥ paraḥ.* Nārāyaṇa, or Lord Viṣṇu, is the origin, and Brahmā and Śiva are manifested after creation.

Lord Viṣṇu is also *ātmeśvara,* the Supersoul in everyone. Under His direction, everything is prompted from within. ③ For example, in the beginning of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is stated, *tene brahma hṛdā:* He first educated Lord Brahmā from within.

In *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.2) Lord Kṛṣṇa states, *aham ādir hi devānām:* Lord Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa, is the origin of all demigods, including Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva. In another place in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.8) Kṛṣṇa states, *ahaṁ sarvasya prabhavaḥ:* "Everything is generated from Me." This includes all the demigods. Similarly, in the *Vedānta-sūtra: janmādy asya yataḥ.* And in the *Upaniṣads* is the statement *yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante.* Everything is generated from Lord Viṣṇu, everything is maintained by Him, and everything is annihilated by His energy. Therefore, by their actions and reactions, the energies which come from Him create the cosmic manifestations and also dissolve the whole creation. Thus the Lord is the cause and

(1) From whom was Lord Brahmā born?
(2) From whom was Lord Śiva born?
(3) How did Lord Viṣṇu educate Lord Brahmā?

also the effect. ④ Whatever effect we see is the interaction of His energy, and because the energy is generated from Him, He is both cause and effect. Simultaneously, everything is different and the same. ⑤ It is said that everything is Brahman: *sarvaṁ khalv idaṁ brahma.* In the highest vision, nothing is beyond Brahman, and therefore Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva are certainly nondifferent from Him.

51 आत्ममायां समाविश्य सोऽहं गुणमयीं द्विज
सृजन् रक्षन् हरन् विश्वं दध्रे संज्ञां क्रियोचिताम्

ātma-māyāṁ samāviśya
so 'haṁ guṇamayīṁ dvija
sṛjan rakṣan haran viśvaṁ
dadhre saṁjñāṁ kriyocitām

ātma-māyām—My energy; *samāviśya*—having entered; *saḥ*—Myself; *aham*—I; *guṇa-mayīm*—composed of the modes of material nature; *dvi-ja*—O twice-born Dakṣa; *sṛjan*—creating; *rakṣan*—maintaining; *haran*—annihilating; *viśvam*—the cosmic manifestation; *dadhre*—I cause to be born; *saṁjñām*—a name; *kriyā-ucitām*—according to the activity.

The Lord continued: My dear Dakṣa Dvija, I am the original Personality of Godhead, but in order to create, maintain, and annihilate this cosmic manifestation, I act through My material energy, and according to the different grades of activity, My representations are differently named.

PURPORT: As explained in *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.5), *jīva-bhūtāṁ mahā-bāho:* the whole world is energy released from the supreme source, the Personality of Godhead, who, it is further stated in *Bhagavad-gītā,* acts in superior energies and inferior energies. ⑥ The superior energy is the living entity, who is part and parcel of the Supreme Lord. As parts and parcels, the living entities are not different from the Supreme Lord; the energy emanated from Him is not different from Him. But in the actual activity of this material world, the living entity is under the different qualities of material energy and in different forms.

There are 8,400,000 life forms. The same living entity acts under the influence of the different qualities of material nature. ⑦ The entities have different bodies, but originally, in the beginning of creation, Lord Viṣṇu is alone. For the purpose of creation, Brahmā is manifested, and for annihilation there is Lord Śiva.

As far as the spiritual entrance into the material world is concerned, all beings are part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, but under the covering of different material qualities they have different names. Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva are qualitative incarnations of Viṣṇu, as *guṇa-avatāras,* and Viṣṇu with them accepts control of the quality of goodness; therefore He is also a qualitative incarnation like Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā. Actually the different names exist for different directions, otherwise the origin is one only.

(4) How is Lord Viṣṇu both the cause and the effect?
(5) In what way are Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva nondifferent from Lord Viṣṇu?
(6) What constitutes the superior energy of the Lord?
(7) Who among Brahmā, Śiva, and Viṣṇu exists alone before the creation?

52 तस्मिन् ब्रह्मण्यद्वितीये केवले परमात्मनि
ब्रह्मरुद्रौ च भूतानि भेदेनाज्ञोऽनुपश्यति

tasmin brahmaṇy advitīye
kevale paramātmani
brahma-rudrau ca bhūtāni
bhedenājño 'nupaśyati

tasmin—Him; *brahmaṇi*—the Supreme Brahman; *advitīye*—without a second; *kevale*—being one; *parama-ātmani*—the Supersoul; *brahma-rudrau*—both Brahmā and Śiva; *ca*—and; *bhūtāni*—the living entities; *bhedena*—with separation; *ajñaḥ*—one who is not properly conversant; *anupaśyati*—thinks.

The Lord continued: One who is not in proper knowledge thinks that demigods like Brahmā and Śiva are independent, or he even thinks that the living entities are independent.

PURPORT: The living entities, including Brahmā, are not independently separated, but are counted within the marginal potency of the Supreme Lord. The Supreme Lord, being the Supersoul in every living entity, including Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, is directing everyone in the activities of the material modes of nature. No one can act independently of the sanction of the Lord, and therefore, indirectly, no one is different from the Supreme Person—certainly not Brahmā and Rudra, who are incarnations of the material nature's modes of passion and ignorance.

53 यथा पुमान्न स्वाङ्गेषु शिरःपाण्यादिषु क्वचित्
पारक्यबुद्धिं कुरुते एवं भूतेषु मत्परः

yathā pumān na svāṅgeṣu
śiraḥ-pāṇy-ādiṣu kvacit
pārakya-buddhiṁ kurute
evaṁ bhūteṣu mat-paraḥ

yathā—as; *pumān*—a person; *na*—not; *sva-aṅgeṣu*—in his own body; *śiraḥ-pāṇi-ādiṣu*—between the head and the hands and other parts of the body; *kvacit*—sometimes; *pārakya-buddhim*—differentiation; *kurute*—make; *evam*—thus; *bhūteṣu*—among living entities; *mat-paraḥ*—My devotee.

A person with average intelligence does not think the head and other parts of the body to be separate. Similarly, My devotee does not differentiate Viṣṇu, the all-pervading Personality of Godhead, from any thing or any living entity.

PURPORT: Whenever there is disease in any part of the body, the whole body takes care of the ailing part. Similarly, a devotee's oneness is manifested in His compassion for all conditioned souls. *Bhagavad-gītā* (5.18) says, *paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ:* those who are learned see everyone's conditional life equally. Devotees are compassionate to every conditioned soul, and therefore they are known as *apārakya-buddhi.* ⑧ Because devotees are learned and know that every living entity is part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, they preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness to everyone so that everyone may be happy. If a particular part of the body is diseased, the whole attention of the body goes to that part. Similarly, devotees care for any person who is forgetful of Kṛṣṇa and therefore in material consciousness. The equal vision of the devotee is that he works to get all living entities back home, back to Godhead.

54 त्रयाणामेकभावानां यो न पश्यति वै भिदाम्
सर्वभूतात्मनां ब्रह्मन् स शान्तिमधिगच्छति

trayāṇām eka-bhāvānāṁ
yo na paśyati vai bhidām
sarva-bhūtātmanāṁ brahman
sa śāntim adhigacchati

trayāṇām—of the three; *eka-bhāvānām*—having one nature; *yaḥ*—who; *na paśyati*—does not see; *vai*—certainly; *bhidām*—separateness; *sarva-bhūta-ātmanām*—of the Supersoul of all living entities; *brahman*—O Dakṣa; *saḥ*—he; *śāntim*—peace; *adhigacchati*—realizes.

The Lord continued: One who does not consider Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, or the living entities in general to be separate from the Supreme, and who knows Brahman, actually realizes peace; others do not.

PURPORT: Two words are very significant in this verse. *Trayāṇām* indicates "three," namely Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, and Lord Viṣṇu. *Bhidām* means "different." They are three, and therefore they are separate, but at the same time they are one. This is the philosophy of simultaneous oneness and difference, called *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva.* ⑨ The example given in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* is that milk and yogurt are simultaneously one and different; both are milk, but the yogurt has become changed.

In order to achieve real peace, one should see everything and every living entity, including Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, as nondifferent from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. No one is independent. Every one of us is an expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This accounts for unity in diversity. There are diverse manifestations, but, at the same time, they are one in Viṣṇu. Everything is an expansion of Viṣṇu's energy.

मैत्रेय उवाच
55 एवं भगवतादिष्टः प्रजापतिपतिर्हरिम्
अर्चित्वा क्रतुना स्वेन देवानुभयतोऽयजत्

maitreya uvāca
evaṁ bhagavatādiṣṭaḥ
prajāpati-patir harim
arcitvā kratunā svena
devān ubhayato 'yajat

maitreyaḥ—Maitreya; *uvāca*—said; *evam*—thus; *bhagavatā*—by the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ādiṣṭaḥ*—having been instructed; *prajāpati-patiḥ*—the head of all the Prajāpatis; *harim*—Hari; *arcitvā*—after worshiping; *kratunā*—with the sacrificial ceremonies; *svena*—his own; *devān*—the demigods; *ubhayataḥ*—separately; *ayajat*—worshiped.

The sage Maitreya said: Thus Dakṣa, the head of all Prajāpatis, having been nicely instructed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, worshiped Lord Viṣṇu. After worshiping Him by performing the prescribed sacrificial ceremonies, Dakṣa separately worshiped Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva.

PURPORT: Lord Viṣṇu should be offered everything, and His *prasāda* should be distributed to all the demigods. This practice is still followed in the temple of Jagannātha at Purī. There are many temples of demigods around the main temple of Jagannātha, and the *prasāda* which is offered first to Jagannātha is distributed to all the demigods. The deity of Bhagālin is worshiped with the *prasāda* of Viṣṇu, and also, in the famous Lord Śiva temple of Bhuvaneśvara, the *prasāda* of Lord Viṣṇu or Lord Jagannātha is offered to the deity of Lord Śiva. This is the Vaiṣṇava principle.

The Vaiṣṇava does not deride even ordinary living entities, including the small ant; everyone is offered proper

(8) Why do devotees of the Lord preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness to everyone?
(9) What example is given in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* to illustrate the philosophy of *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*?

respect according to his position. The offering, however, is in relation to the center, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, or Viṣṇu. ⑩ The devotee who is highly elevated sees the relationship to Kṛṣṇa in everything; he does not see anything as being independent of Kṛṣṇa. That is his vision of oneness.

56 रुद्रं च स्वेन भागेन ह्युपाधावत्समाहितः
कर्मणोदवसानेन सोमपानितरानपि
उदवस्य सहर्त्विग्भिः सस्नाववभृथं ततः

rudraṁ ca svena bhāgena
hy upādhāvat samāhitaḥ
karmaṇodavasānena
somapān itarān api
udavasya sahartvigbhiḥ
sasnāv avabhṛthaṁ tataḥ

rudram—Lord Śiva; *ca*—and; *svena*—with his own; *bhāgena*—share; *hi*—since; *upādhāvat*—he worshiped; *samāhitaḥ*—with concentrated mind; *karmaṇā*—by the performance; *udavasānena*—by the act of finishing; *soma-pān*—demigods; *itarān*—other; *api*—even; *udavasya*—after finishing; *saha*—along with; *ṛtvigbhiḥ*—with the priests; *sasnau*—bathed; *avabhṛtham*—the *avabhṛtha* bath; *tataḥ*—then.

With all respect, Dakṣa worshiped Lord Śiva with his share of the remnants of the yajña. After finishing the ritualistic sacrificial activities, he satisfied all the other demigods and the other people assembled there. Then, after finishing all these duties with the priests, he took a bath and was fully satisfied.

PURPORT: Lord Rudra, Śiva, was properly worshiped with his share of the remnants of the *yajña. Yajña* is Viṣṇu, and whatever *prasāda* is offered to Viṣṇu is offered to everyone, even to Lord Śiva. Śrīdhara Svāmī also comments in this connection, *svena bhāgena:* the remnants of the *yajña* are offered to all the demigods and others.

57 तस्मा अप्यनुभावेन स्वेनैवावाप्तराधसे
धर्म एव मतिं दत्त्वा त्रिदशास्ते दिवं ययुः

tasmā apy anubhāvena
svenaivāvāpta-rādhase
dharma eva matiṁ dattvā
tridaśās te divaṁ yayuḥ

tasmai—unto him (Dakṣa); api—even; *anubhāvena*—by worshiping the Supreme Lord; *svena*—by his own; *eva*—certainly; *avāpta-rādhase*—having attained perfection; *dharme*—in religion; *eva*—certainly; *matim*—intelligence; *dattvā*—having given; *tridaśāḥ*—demigods; *te*—those; *divam*—to the heavenly planets; *yayuḥ*—went.

(10) What is the devotee's vision of oneness?

Thus worshiping the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu by the ritualistic performance of sacrifice, Dakṣa was completely situated on the religious path. Moreover, all the demigods who had assembled at the sacrifice blessed him that he might increase his piety, and then they left.

PURPORT: Although Dakṣa was considerably advanced in religious principles, he awaited the blessings of the demigods. Thus the great sacrifice conducted by Dakṣa ended in harmony and peace.

58 एवं दाक्षायणी हित्वा सती पूर्वकलेवरम्
जज्ञे हिमवतः क्षेत्रे मेनायामिति शुश्रुम

evaṁ dākṣāyaṇī hitvā
satī pūrva-kalevaram
jajñe himavataḥ kṣetre
menāyām iti śuśruma

evam—thus; *dākṣāyaṇī*—the daughter of Dakṣa; *hitvā*—after giving up; *satī*—Satī; *pūrva-kalevaram*—her former body; *jajñe*—was born; *himavataḥ*—of the Himalayas; *kṣetre*—in the wife; *menāyām*—in Menā; *iti*—thus; *śuśruma*—I have heard.

Maitreya said: I have heard that after giving up the body she had received from Dakṣa, Dākṣāyaṇī (his daughter) took her birth in the kingdom of the Himalayas. She was born as the daughter of Menā. I heard this from authoritative sources.

PURPORT: Menā is also known as Menakā and is the wife of the king of the Himalayas.

59 तमेव दयितं भूय आवृङ्क्ते पतिमम्बिका
अनन्यभावैकगतिं शक्तिः सुप्तेव पूरुषम्

tam eva dayitaṁ bhūya
āvṛṅkte patim ambikā
ananya-bhāvaika-gatiṁ
śaktiḥ supteva pūruṣam

tam—him (Lord Śiva); *eva*—certainly; *dayitam*—beloved; *bhūyaḥ*—again; *āvṛṅkte*—accepted; *patim*—as her husband; *ambikā*—Ambikā, or Satī; *ananya-bhāvā*—without attachment for others; *eka-gatim*—the one goal; *śaktiḥ*—the feminine (marginal and external) energies; *suptā*—lying dormant; *iva*—as; *pūruṣam*—the masculine (Lord Śiva, as representative of the Supreme Lord).

[*Continued in the next issue.*]

SOLACE FROM THE PAIN OF LOSS

The loss of a loved one brought pain, philosophical inquiry, and soon Śrīla Prabhupāda's shelter.

by Rādhikā Kṛpā Devī Dāsī

THE DARK, foggy night of December 22, 1998, transformed my life. That night, death became real to me as it barged into my life and snatched away my dearest, most beloved friend: my father.

Born in affluence, I had tread the path of life without ever stopping to ponder its meaning. I strove only to get material products, and happiness meant possessing worldly things. Basking in the love of my near and dear ones boosted my feeling of security. My world was a caring husband, two beautiful, affectionate children, and doting parents. What more could I ask from the Lord? Foolishly enough, I was enjoying this sunshine, thinking it to be eternal and forgetting that life is like a twig that can sway with the slightest breeze.

Surrounded by loved ones, we forget that we have higher goals to accomplish. Pain caused by the death of a near one is the best of tutors. Although I was like other materialists in many ways, the spiritual principles of my childhood helped me learn from pain. As a child, I visited temples and gurudwaras (shrines of the Sikh community) and followed some rituals. I read the *Guru Granth Sahib* (the scripture of the Sikhs) regularly in the morning and evening, although without much comprehension.

My father was admitted to the hospital for angioplasty. The doctors said the procedure was safe, but it ended in tragedy. When the doctors said that he was in critical condition, I prayed to God to save him. Although it might seem that those prayers were to no avail, I credit my status as a devotee of Kṛṣṇa today to that moment of my life.

I'm sure that my prayers must have helped him in some way in his last moments, but they revolutionized my life. The Lord started guiding me toward Him. My purification began when I decided at the hospital—right after the doctors announced they were losing my father—to become a vegetarian. I still don't understand what inspired me to take that vow, but today I thank the Lord for showing me the way.

My Quest Begins

The pain of separation made me morose and flooded me with questions. Searching for answers, I writhed in pain. Still, I wondered why I had never asked the questions before. They seemed so basic, but it took thirty-eight years for them to invade my consciousness: Who are we? Why are we here? Where will we go after death? And especially, Who is God? The next six months took me to various religious places in search of answers to these questions. I went to far-off places to pray to Hanumānjī, to Lord Śiva, to Durgā, not for any material gain but for the answer to my main question: Who is God? Besides visiting temples and gurudwaras to offer prayers, I started reading the scriptures with great intensity.

Visit to Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhāma

Śrīla Prabhupāda has rightly said that Kṛṣṇa sees our sincere endeavor to know Him. Kṛṣṇa answered my prayers and pulled me to His holy abode.

In reply to my prayers, the Lord arranged for me to reach my destination of solace.

On May 15, 1999, Kṛṣṇa brought my family and me to Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir in Vṛndāvana. Although I had resided in Delhi since birth, I had never visited Vṛndāvana. But now, in reply to my prayers, the Lord arranged for me to reach my destination of solace. The answers to my questions were awaiting me.

After taking *darśana* of the beautiful deities, we were guided by a devotee to Śrīla Prabhupāda's quarters. Śrīla Prabhupāda is the *śikṣā* (instructing) guru for anyone who enters the temple premises with feelings of inquisitiveness and surrender. He is ready to help you, especially when you feel in dire need of help and are ready to accept it from him. The devotee who showed us around in Prabhupāda's quarters narrated Prabhupāda's purpose behind establishing the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. By Kṛṣṇa's planning and mercy I got the answers to my questions. It seemed the answers were flowing to me automatically.

The sanctity of the place and the blessings of Prabhupāda convinced my husband and me enough to start to follow his teachings then and there. We had the opportunity to chant one round of *japa* around the Śrīla Prabhupāda Samādhi (memorial tomb), adding to the mercy already showered on us. Kṛṣṇa is so merciful that He let my husband support me fully; He gave us both the intelligence to come to Him. Lord Kṛṣṇa made my path to Him obstacle free.

Our guide requested us to stay for the evening *ārati* to enjoy an "out-of-this-world experience." Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara wanted to bless me fully, leaving no room for doubt. Waiting for the evening *ārati* meant spending a hot afternoon in May with our children outside the temple (the temple is closed in the afternoon), sometimes on the stairs of the Prabhupāda Samādhi and sometimes on the floor of the guesthouse.

When the temple reopened at 4:15 P.M., we joined the devotees doing *kīrtana.* The time flew, and at 7:00 P.M. the grand Gaura *ārati* echoed in the air with joyful *kīrtana* and dance. The atmosphere was electrified; the melodious sounds of *mṛdaṅgas* and *karatālas* filled the temple hall. Everyone was involved, no one left out—all feet dancing, hands clapping. Everyone seemed overjoyed at the sight of the Lord. It was amazing, indeed out of this mundane world—a spiritual experience beyond words. Both of us were now determined not to let the experience escape us. We departed with hearts filled with newfound joy. I could sensed in the deepest core of my heart that I had been fortunate enough to be blessed by the most beautiful deities: Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara. I had left my heart with Them.

Meeting My Spiritual Father

Shortly thereafter we visited the small ISKCON center in Punjabi Bagh, near our house. It had been there for eighteen years but had never appealed to us. Our destiny was to first receive the mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda in the holy city of Vṛndāvana. Without *guru-kṛpā*, the mercy of the guru, one can't reach one's real destination. Soon we were chanting sixteen rounds on our beads and following the rules and regulations Prabhupāda had prescribed. We could feel the mercy flowing in our lives. Then we met our would-be spiritual father, our *guru-mahārāja,* His Holiness Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami. The love and compassion he showered made me forget the agony I was going through. I could now understand the real purpose of life. My mind could now comprehend the religious scriptures that I had previously read but never fathomed.

His Holiness Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami accepted us as his disciples in 2001. Today I feel myself steering ahead on the safe road of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. My self-transformation has been enormous.

As Śrīla Prabhupāda has rightly said, when in touch with the Supreme Lord we become aware of our abilities and can use them in the service of the Lord. I now give lectures on Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Recently, I gave ten lectures in Pakistan, one at a program attended by eleven hundred people. I also spent three weeks in Sydney, Australia, where I spoke twenty times at various places. Last year, I was on television in India every day for four months, speaking on the *Gītā* for fifteen minutes.

I am also a working woman, a fashion designer by profession. I design and produce Indian dresses, and I've begun designing outfits for ISKCON deities. Last year I also published a book of my poems glorifying the Lord, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and my spiritual master.

My husband is a businessman. He has an Ayurvedic medicine factory and deals in real estate. He also designs wooden altars.

We are both deeply grateful for the blessings we've received, especially the opportunity to serve the Lord. It all began with our contact with Śrīla Prabhupāda through his temples and his Society. We encourage everyone to clutch his hand and toddle with us back to Godhead.

THE HOLY NAME

(*continued from page 10*)

radio sounds from different countries, from the spiritual world we receive the vibration of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. *Rati nā janmilo kene tāy:* "I could not get my attachment to this transcendental vibration." *Saṁsāra-biṣānale, dibā-niśi hiyā jwale, jurāite nā koinu upāy:* "I am suffering constantly with the poison of this materialistic way of life, and I did not try to get out of it by taking shelter of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra.*"

Then Narottama Dāsa says, *brajendra-nandana yei, śacī-suta hoilo sei.* "In this age, the same Supreme Personality of Godhead who appeared five thousand years ago as the son of Nanda Mahārāja—that Kṛṣṇa has appeared in this age as the son of mother Śacī." Lord Caitanya's mother's name was Śacī-devī. *Balarāma hoilo nitāi:* "The same Balarāma who appeared as Kṛṣṇa's elder brother has appeared as Nityānanda."

What is the business of Lord Caitanya and Nityānanda Prabhu? *Dīna-hīna jata chilo, hari-nāme uddhārilo*—delivering the lowly, wretched souls with the holy name. There are two kinds of people within the material world. One is committing sin and the other is suffering sinful reactions. *Pāpī-tāpī.* That is our business. In this life, I am suffering the resultant action of my past impious activities and creating another set of impious activities so that I shall suffer next life. *Hari-nāme uddhārilo:* But everyone can be delivered simply by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Thank you very much.

A PHILOSOPHY OF FRUSTRATION

(*continued from page 24*)

are saying that life is absurd, and I am saying that life is not absurd. Who will settle this? Who will settle it—whether you are right or I am right'?

Priest: I don't think it can ever be settled.

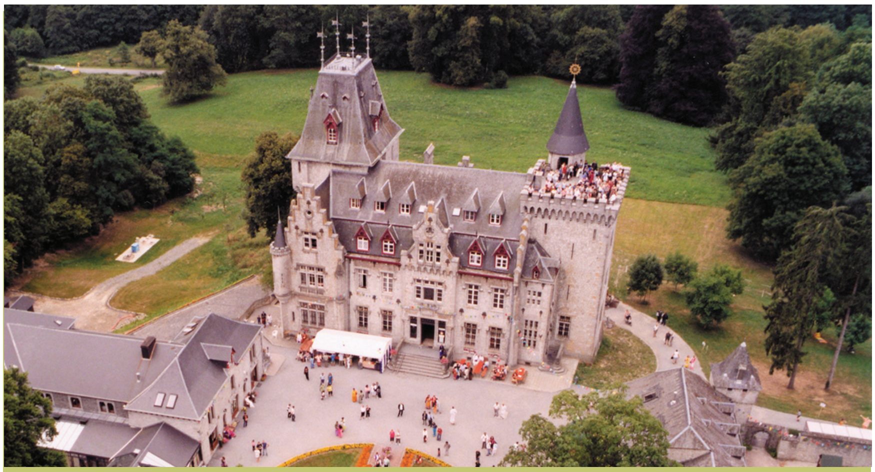
Śrīla Prabhupāda: It will be settled at death. That's all. A rascal may think foolishly that life is absurd—but death will not be absurd. *Mṛtyuḥ sarva-haraś cāham.* Lord Kṛṣṇa says, "Everyone must finally accept Me—as death." Both of us will have to accept death. You don't want to die, and I don't want to die; but both of us have to accept that supreme authority. That is God.

Priest: But speaking of Camus, he didn't care. He died willingly. He wanted to die.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: He did not want to die, but he may have let himself die in that way just to keep his prestige, that's all.

Priest: I think he wanted to die.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If you also want to die, then let me kill you now and you'll be happy.



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January 15–May 16

Bhagavad-gītā—
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Lakṣmīmaṇī Devī Dāsī (Chapters 9–18)
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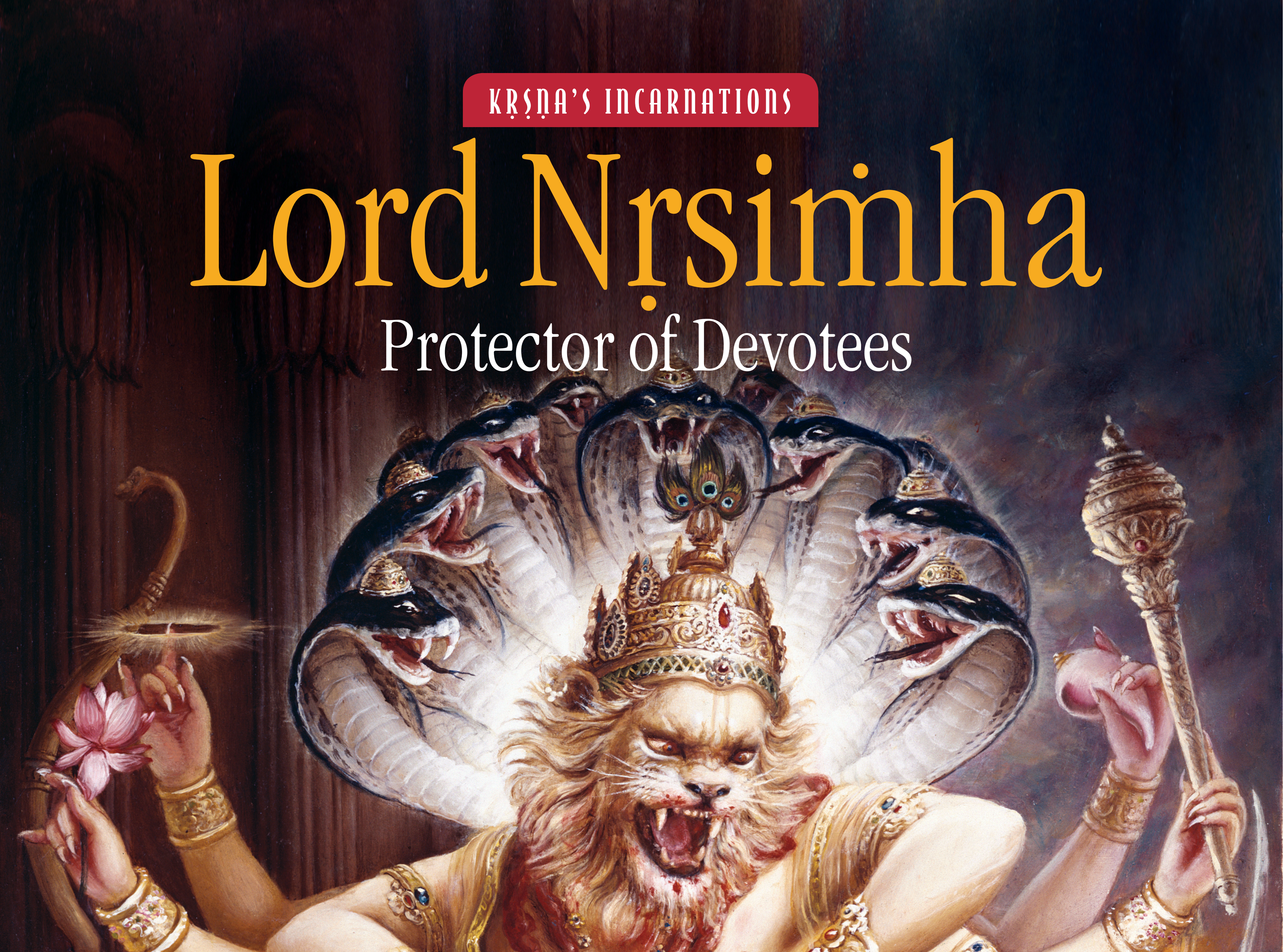
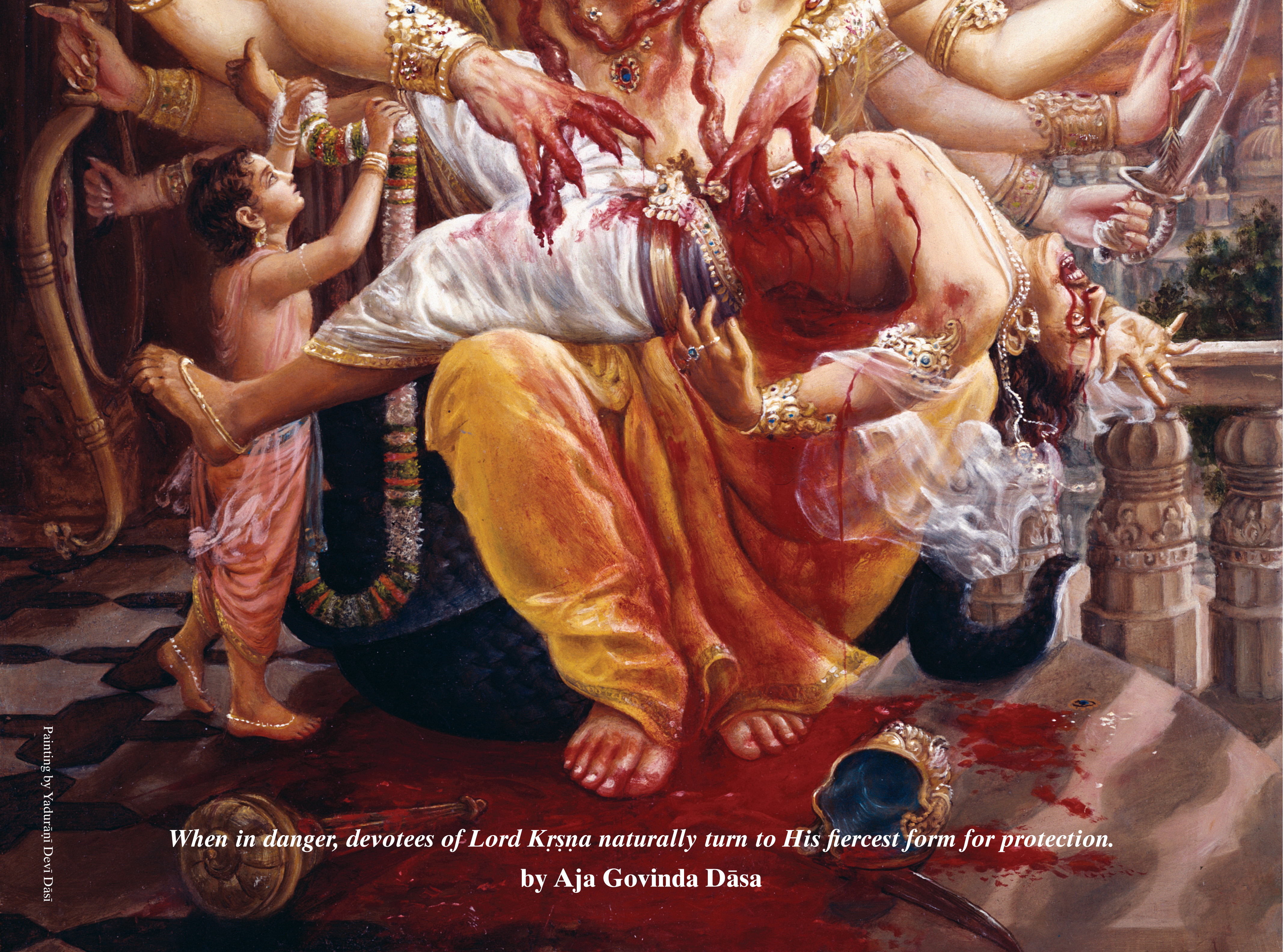
KṚṢṆA'S INCARNATIONS

Lord Nṛsiṁha

Protector of Devotees





When in danger, devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa naturally turn to His fiercest form for protection.

by Aja Govinda Dāsa

Painting by Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī

ONE OF THE most awe-inspiring of Lord Kṛṣṇa's forms is Śrī Nṛsiṁhadeva, His half-man, half-lion incarnation. Lord Nṛsiṁha descended to protect His devotee Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja from the atheistic king Hiraṇyakaśipu, Prahlāda's father.

The Boy Saint Prahlāda

Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja was a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa from birth, having acquired knowledge of devotional service in the womb. Once, during the absence of Hiraṇyakaśipu, his enemies the demigods, servants of the Supreme Lord responsible for universal management, kidnapped his wife to kill her embryo. They feared that the embryo might later develop into another terrible enemy. Śrīla Nārada Muni rescued the mother and child after convincing the demigods that the boy to be born was an exalted devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. [See sidebar "Why Prahlāda Became Hiraṇyakaśipu's Son."]

While still in the womb during his mother's stay at Nārada Muni's ashram, Prahlāda overheard Nārada's transcendental discussions on the glories of the Lord and became fearless, fully surrendered to the infallible shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Later, though only a child of five years, he had firm faith in the Lord's protection and invoked this same pure devotion to the Lord in the hearts of his schoolmates at the atheistic school of Śukrācārya, the guru of the *daityas*, or atheistic descendents of Diti. Enraged at his son's undeviating devotion to his worst enemy—Lord Viṣṇu, the four-handed form of Lord Kṛṣṇa—Hiraṇyakaśipu sentenced Prahlāda to death. Hiraṇyakaśipu's henchmen tried everything to kill Prahlāda. He was starved, poisoned, cursed by spells, beaten by fiends, stomped by elephants, encaged among virulent pythons, hurled from mountain peaks, and attacked with stones, fires, and blizzards. Despite all Hiraṇyakaśipu's attempts, Prahlāda remained untouched, and the evil king's anger grew.

Hiraṇyakaśipu's Plans to Become God

Hiraṇyakaśipu's enmity toward Lord Viṣṇu had begun when the Lord in His form as a giant boar had slain Hiraṇyakaśipu's twin brother, Hiraṇyākṣa, who had upset the earth's equilibrium by greedily mining for gold. Upon the death of his brother, Hiraṇyakaśipu had charged Lord Viṣṇu with partiality toward the demigods: "The Supreme Personality of Godhead has given up His natural tendency of equality toward the demons and demigods. Although He is the Supreme Person, now, influenced by *māyā* [illusion], He has assumed the form of a boar to please His devotees, the demigods, just as a restless child leans toward someone."

Factually the Lord is never partial to anyone: *samo 'haṁ sarva-bhūteṣu na me dveśyo 'sti na priyaḥ* (*Bhagavad-gītā* 9.29). He simply reciprocates with every living entity in accordance with the living entities' desires. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa instructs in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.11):

ye yathā māṁ prapadyante
tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham
mama vartmānuvartante
manuṣyāṁ pārtha sarvaśaḥ

"As all surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly. Everyone follows My path in all respects, O son of Pṛthā." Thus the Lord appears as death for the atheist and as the loving savior for His devotee. And He Himself is beyond any material affinity.

To take revenge for his brother's death, the mighty *daitya* Hiraṇyakaśipu vowed to satisfy his brother's soul with Viṣṇu's blood. In his quest for immortality and the power to defeat Viṣṇu, he performed humanly impossible penances through which he acquired boons from Lord Brahmā, the creator of the universe. Hiraṇyakaśipu thought he could become God by his own austerity and penance. He foolishly concluded that since Lord

Why Prahlāda Became Hiraṇyakaśipu's Son

ONCE, THE POWERFUL Hiraṇyakaśipu ascended the peak of Mount Kailāsa, the residence of Lord Śiva, and began performing severe austerities. Lord Brahmā, administrator of the entire universe, began to think how to stop the *daitya,* knowing well that Hiraṇyakaśipu would terrify the universe with the power gained from his austerities. Sage Nārada assured his worried father, Brahmā, that he would distract Hiraṇyakaśipu from his ascetic trance.

Nārada and his friend Parvata Muni assumed the form of birds and flew to the place where Hiraṇyakaśipu was rapt in meditation. There they recited the mantra *oṁ namo nārāyaṇāya* three times. On hearing the name of his enemy Nārāyaṇa, or Viṣṇu, Hiraṇyakaśipu shot an arrow to kill the birds, but the sages flew away.

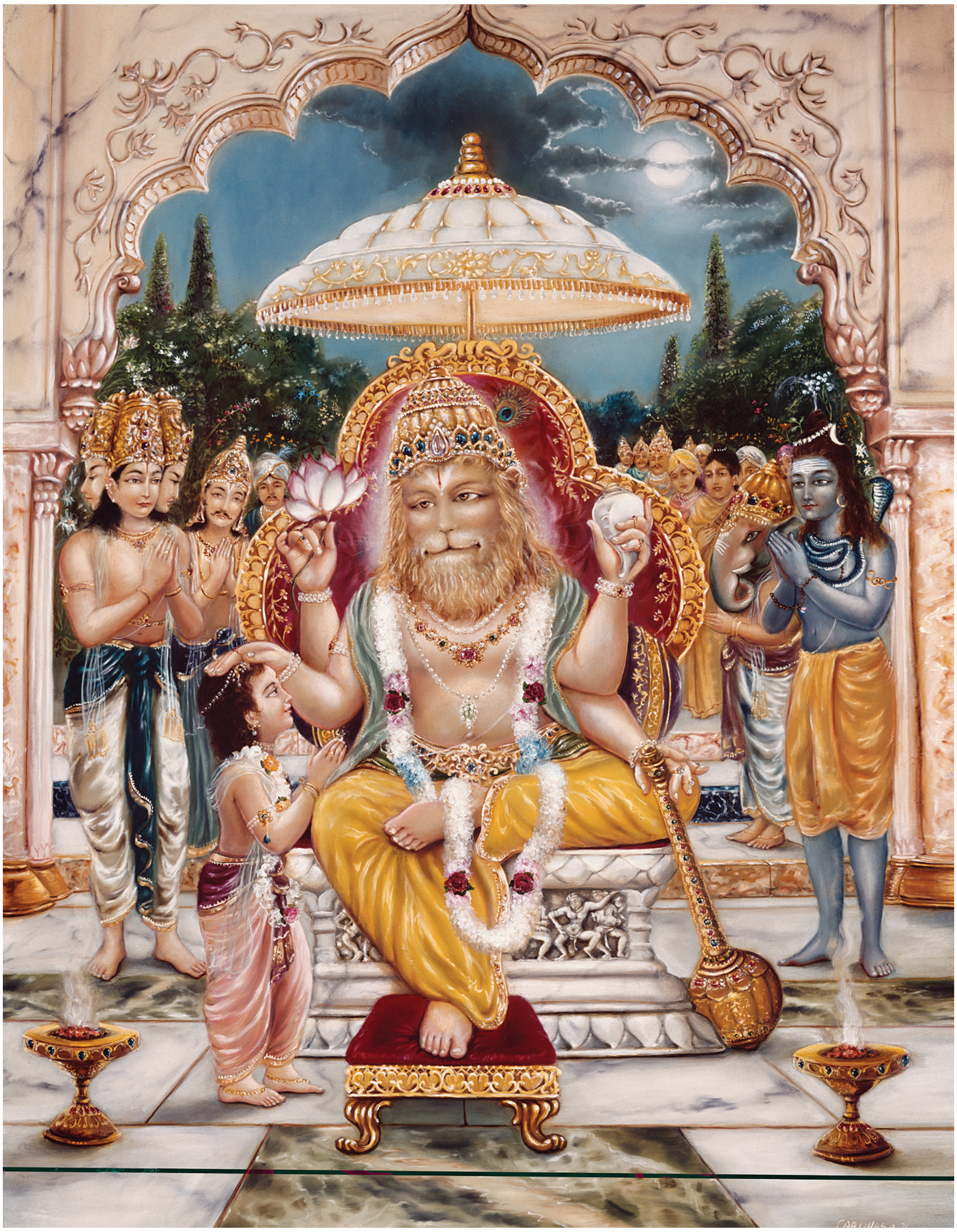
Distracted from his penance, Hiraṇyakaśipu retired to his palace, where he enjoyed the night with his queen Kayādhu. Kayādhu asked her husband why he had abandoned his resolution to perform austerity for ten thousand years. He informed her of the birds who had disturbed him with the loud chanting of the names of Nārāyaṇa. As the mighty *daitya* was intimately enjoying the company of his wife, his semen discharged into her just when he told her of the mantra *oṁ namo nārāyaṇāya.* Thus the holy names of the Lord were recited at the time of Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja's conception.
—From *Nṛsiṁha Purāṇa* 41.7–34

Viṣṇu was favoring the demigods, He must also be an ordinary conditioned living entity (influenced by partiality and hatred) who became God by austerities. This mentality is characteristic of Māyāvādī philosophers, who maintain that every soul is God deluded by *māyā* and that once the illusion is dispelled, the soul once again realizes its identity with God. This theory, however, is unacceptable when we consider the Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Kṛṣṇa's supremacy, as He states in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.10):

mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ
sūyate sa-carācaram
hetunānena kaunteya
jagad viparivartate

"This material nature, which is one of My energies, is working under My direction, O son of Kuntī, producing all moving and nonmoving beings. Under its rule this manifestation is created and annihilated again and again." The material energy, *māyā,* is one of the many potencies of the Supreme Lord. Since *māyā* is completely submissive to the Lord, there is no possibility of the Supreme Absolute Lord being overpowered by its influence. The living entities, however, being minute parts of the Lord, can be deluded. The Māyāvāda theory that after liberation the soul merges with God is refuted in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.7, 2.12), where Kṛṣṇa declares all *jīva* souls to be His parts eternally, remaining always distinct individuals.

The Māyāvādīs also assert that the highest conception of God is of the transcendental, impersonal, and all-pervading *nirguṇa-brahma* (Absolute Truth devoid of quality, attribute, or form), which assumes a material conditioned body like ours whenever it descends to this world. Thus for the Māyāvādīs, Lord Viṣṇu or Lord Kṛṣṇa are *saguṇa-brahma*, Brahman with attributes and form, which to them means material illusory entanglement, for they just cannot imagine transcendence with qualities and form.


Painting by Caruhasa Dāsa

After killing Hiraṇyakaśipu on His lap (pp. 34–35), Lord Nṛsiṁha accepts worship and prayers from Prahlāda and exalted personalities from all over the universe.

Frustrated with the suffering caused by the material body, the impersonalist philosophers conceive of transcendence and liberation as free from qualities and attributes. The Lord, however, clearly defies this notion:

avyaktaṁ vyaktim āpannaṁ
manyante mām abuddhayaḥ
paraṁ bhāvam ajānanto
mamāvyayam anuttamam

"Unintelligent men, who do not know Me perfectly, think that I, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, was impersonal before and have now assumed this personality. Due to their small knowledge, they do not know My higher nature, which is imperishable and supreme." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.24) Thus from the *Bhagavad-gītā* we learn that Lord Kṛṣṇa never worked to achieve Godhood. He

How Prahlāda Knew That Lord Nṛsiṁha Would Protect Him

AS ONE OF THE LAST efforts to kill Prahlāda, Hiraṇyakaśipu ordered his soldiers to tie Prahlāda with *nāgapāśa* (snake cords) in the dead of night, throw him into the sea, and hurl gigantic boulders to crush him at the sea bottom. When Prahlāda was tossed into the ocean, the waves carried him onto the shore, where Lord Viṣṇu's personal carrier, the mighty eagle Garuḍa, descended and freed Prahlāda from the life-sucking snakes. Then Varuṇa, lord of the sea, awoke Prahlāda with offerings of respect.

Upon regaining consciousness, Prahlāda prayed to Varuṇa, "O Lord of the ocean, you are fortunate to always behold Lord Viṣṇu, who lies on a serpent bed upon your waters. Please instruct me how I may behold Him before my very eyes."

Varuṇa replied, "Dear Prahlāda, O best of yogis, simply pray to Him in deepest meditation, and the Lord, who is the benefactor of His devotees, will certainly appear before you."

Then Varuṇa vanished into the water.

Considering himself ineligible to access the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu, Prahlāda sobbed as his heart sank in sorrow, and he fell unconscious. Then Lord Viṣṇu appeared there and lifted Prahlāda onto His lap. Awakened by the loving hands of the Lord, Prahlāda was filled with fear, surprise, and pleasure upon beholding the Lord, and he fainted in ecstasy. The Lord embraced Prahlāda, and when Prahlāda regained consciousness, he prostrated himself before the Lord but was unable to offer any prayers.

The Lord lifted him up and said, "O son, give up your fear of My majesty, for no one is more beloved to Me than you. Please ask from Me whatever is dearest to you."

Prahlāda replied, "My Lord, I wish only to sip the nectar of Your divine form, which is rarely seen even by the greatest demigods."

When the Lord again requested Prahlāda to ask a boon, the great saint asked only for exclusive, undeviating devotion to Him.

After blessing Prahlāda to acquire anything he desired and enjoy all pleasures, the Lord said, "Do not grieve upon My disappearance, for I will never be separated from your heart. Very soon you will behold me again when, to kill Hiraṇyakaśipu, I appear in the form of Nṛsiṁha, loving to the saints and deadly to the atheists."

—From *Nṛsiṁha Purāṇa* 43.28–85

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is eternally the Supreme Absolute Truth, and the individual souls are eternally His parts.

Nṛsiṁhadeva Kills Hiraṇyakaśipu

Just as the Māyāvādīs maintain the false theory that by enough penance a soul can become God, Hiraṇyakaśipu considered that he could achieve immortal dominance over all and vanquish Lord Viṣṇu with his own prowess. But Prahlāda challenged his power.

The arrogant Hiraṇyakaśipu cursed him and inquired, "Where do you obtain the power to defy my supremacy?"

"The source of my strength is Lord Viṣṇu," replied the fearless Prahlāda. "He is the source of everyone's strength, including yours,"

To hear that his strength was the grace of Viṣṇu, his worst enemy, was the greatest insult for Hiraṇyakaśipu, who challenged Prahlāda, "O most unfortunate Prahlāda, you have always described an all-pervading supreme controller beyond me. If He is everywhere, then why is He not present before me in this pillar? If he does not appear from this pillar, then today your head will be severed with my sword."

With these words, Hiraṇyakaśipu struck his fist at the pillar, from which emanated a sound that seemed to crack the covering of the universe. [See sidebar "How Prahlāda Knew that Lord Nṛsiṁha Would Protect Him."]

To prove true the statement of His devotee Prahlāda, the Supreme Lord appeared from the pillar in a form never seen before, a form neither man nor lion, the form of Śrī Nṛsiṁhadeva.

Though Hiraṇyakaśipu looked like a moth entering a fire when he attacked Lord Nṛsiṁha, he ridiculously thought he would be able to defeat the Lord just as he had conquered all his other enemies. Long before, when his brother had been slain, this same Hiraṇyakaśipu had angrily rushed to the Lord's residence with a trident. The Lord had then disappeared and entered Hiraṇyakaśipu's nostril. Unable to find Him, Hiraṇyakaśipu had considered that God was dead.

Now Hiraṇyakaśipu confronted the Lord, who played with him as a cat plays with a mouse. When the sun began to set, Lord Nṛsiṁha lifted Hiraṇyakaśipu onto His lap and dug His nails into Hiraṇyakaśipu's torso.

The *daitya* cried out, "Alas, my chest, which is being ripped open by Nṛsiṁhadeva at this moment, is the same chest that broke the tusks of Airāvata, Indra's elephant. It is the same chest that stayed free of scars despite being struck by Lord Śiva's ax." (*Nṛsiṁha Purāṇa* 44.30)

Nṛsiṁhadeva ripped open the

stonelike chest of Hiraṇyakaśipu with His diamondlike nails. The Lord wore the intestines of the king as His victory garland, and to convince the demigods of Hiraṇyakaśipu's death, the Lord tore out the *daitya's* heart. As another aspect of His divine play, the Lord was suddenly surprised to see that Hiraṇyakaśipu's body had disappeared. When He shook His hands, however, the torn pieces of Hiraṇyakaśipu's body fell out of His nails onto the ground. (*Nṛsiṁha Purāṇa* 44.32–35) From this we understand that Hiraṇyakaśipu was an insignificant insect compared to the transcendental lion Lord Nṛsiṁha. As Jayadeva Gosvāmī confirms:

tava kara-kamala-vare nakham
adbhuta-śṛṅgaṁ
dalita-hiraṇyakaśipu-tanu-bhṛṅgam
keśava dhṛta-narahari-rūpa jaya
jagadīśa hare

"O Keśava! O Lord of the universe! O Lord Hari, who have assumed the form of half man, half lion! All glories to You! Just as one can easily crush a wasp between one's fingernails, so in the same way the body of the wasplike demon Hiraṇyakaśipu has been ripped apart by the wonderful pointed nails on Your beautiful lotus hands."

Lord Nṛsiṁha destroyed Hiraṇyakaśipu without violating the boons granted by Lord Brahmā, who had blessed Hiraṇyakaśipu to not be killed:

- inside or outside any residence (the Lord killed him in the doorway)
- during the day or night (the Lord killed him at twilight)
- on the ground or in the sky (the Lord killed him on His own lap)
- by any human being or animal (Lord Nṛsiṁha is half man, half lion)
- by any demigod, demon, or great snake (the Lord is beyond any of these categories)
- by any weapon or any entity, living or nonliving (Lord Nṛsiṁha pierced the *daitya* with his nails, which are not considered weapons and are neither living nor dead)

Finally, Hiraṇyakaśipu was not to be killed by any living being created by Brahmā or not created by Brahmā. Hiraṇyakaśipu was cautious to ensure that he would also not be killed by Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, and Lord Viṣṇu, the three presiding deities of the universe (the only three living entities within the universe not created by Brahmā). Lord Nṛsiṁha is a *līlā-avatāra,* or pastime incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and is not of the category of Brahmā, Śiva, or Viṣṇu, who are the three *guṇa-avatāras,* or deities in charge of the three modes of material nature.

Hiraṇyakaśipu, the universal tyrant, wished to reverse the system of piety. He wanted the impious to be rewarded and the pious to be punished. Thus upon the death of Hiraṇyakaśipu, all the demigods and inhabitants of various planets offered their prayers to Lord Nṛsiṁha, expressing their gratitude for the Lord's slaying the *daitya,* who had usurped all their riches, wives, and shares of sacrificial offerings. Only Prahlāda Mahārāja, however, could pacify with loving prayers the transcendental wrath of Lord Nṛsiṁha, who is prepared to even appear as half-man, half-lion for the sake of His pure devotees.

Lord Nṛsiṁha was overjoyed upon beholding the firm faith of Prahlāda, and He repeatedly requested him to ask for a boon. But the utmost compassionate Prahlāda, who was more concerned for the welfare of others, only requested the Lord to liberate his demoniac father. The Supreme Lord guaranteed the liberation of twenty-one generations of Prahlāda's dynasty.

Aja Govinda Dāsa, 19, a disciple of His Holiness Hanumatpreśaka Swami, has won a Clarendon scholarship to pursue a Ph.D. in artificial intelligence at Oxford. At age 17, he was named a top ten scholar at Boise State University and one of the top four electrical engineers in the USA by Eta Kappa Nu Honor Society.

Nṛsiṁha's Divine Appearance Day

A CHAPTER IN the *Padma Purāṇa, Uttara Khaṇḍa,* describes the glories of Śrī Nṛsiṁha Caturdaśī, the divine appearance day of Lord Nṛsiṁha. There Lord Śiva narrates the following history to his wife, Pārvatī:

After Lord Nṛsiṁha had slain Hiraṇyakaśipu, Prahlāda offered prayers of heartfelt devotion and then inquired from the Lord, "How was I able to achieve this rarest position of pure devotional service unto You?"

Lord Nṛsiṁha replied, "Prahlāda, in your past life you were an unworthy son of a *brāhmaṇa.* Disregarding the Vedic scriptures, you were addicted to sinful activities. Simply by observing a complete fast from any food or water on My auspicious appearance day, Śrī Nṛsiṁha Caturdaśī, you attained pure devotional service unto Me. To anyone who observes this fast, I grant eternal bliss, enjoyment, and liberation."

Lord Nṛsiṁha is an eternal form of the Lord who appears in different universes at different times to enact His divine pastimes. His Nṛsiṁha Caturdaśī, the fourteenth lunar day of the waxing moon of the Madhusūdana month, is thus an eternally divine day on which His devotees abstain from any food or water till dusk to honor the transcendental appearance of the Lord.

Photo by Yamarāja Dāsa

Happiness with Little . . . Is It Possible?

An urbanite escapes to a village and loses his heart to the simple devotional culture.

by Vraja Vihārī Dāsa

SIMPLE LIVING, high thinking, goes the traditional Indian saying. For a true Mumbai'ite, raised on modern slogans like "Just do it," and "I get what I want," this saying might seem old-fashioned and impractical. But a recent journey to a remote village in the interior of India was an eye-opener for me and compelled me to question my beliefs.

Remuna is a small village fifteen kilometers east of the town of Balasore in Orissa. I was accompanying a group of 170 boys on a pilgrimage to the holy town of Jagannatha Puri. Remuna is also a sacred place because of its Kṛṣṇa deity and its connection to Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, an *ācārya* in our disciplic succession.

As the sun was completing its westward journey, we were about to end an hour-long *harināma* (chanting) procession through the village. For most of us Mumbai'ites, seeing the simple, well-maintained mud houses lining neat, clean roads was shocking. The fragrance of incense and cow dung permeated the atmosphere. We could have never experienced this driving through traffic in Mumbai or being stuffed in a train compartment with five hundred other passengers.

As we passed by each house, all its members came out excitedly and happily greeted us, exuding warmth and affection. Almost all of them clapped, danced, nodded their heads in appreciation, and chanted the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. While cows and little calves moved about merrily in open spaces, elders offered us respectful *namaskars.* Women blew conch shells to invoke auspiciousness, and little children joyfully joined us in the procession, thus declaring our presence in the village to be a festive event for the whole community.

Some of us just couldn't help comparing this response with the cold stares usually thrown at us while on a *harināma* in the cities. High-rise buildings and apartments display signs warning "Beware of dogs" or "Trespassers will be prosecuted," and uniformed security men with their buzzer alarms and other high-tech gadgets become alert, ensuring we don't intrude on anyone's privacy.

Mr. Mohanty, a schoolteacher, knew that a group of devotees would be passing through, and he was honored to have so many devotees near his school. He joyfully greeted each of us with a garland and arranged a refreshing lemon drink as we continued our *harināma*. He also paid obeisances and expressed profuse gratitude for our having blessed his village.

A short break over, we carried on and soon reached our dinner destination, a modest thatched house plastered with cow dung. The clean, natural ambience of a beautiful 300-year-old temple (part of the house) made us feel welcome. Our host, Kamal Lochan Das, supports a big joint family with the meager earnings from his traditional farming.

Since it was dark now, the head of the family stood with a lantern to help us settle down for *prasādam* and later personally served all of us. For generations this simple family, without recognition, has been serving devotees and pilgrims. For the entire *prasādam* feast they cooked, they refused to take even a small donation to reimburse the costs. All of them happily joined us in *kīrtanas* and talks about Kṛṣṇa, and many other villagers congregated. Later as we left the house and thanked the family, elderly Mr. Das, the head of the family, shed tears and made a heartfelt appeal to us to visit his house again.

Remnants of Vedic Culture

Such hospitality is the hallmark of Vedic culture, and many historians have revealed the glory of ancient India, when this way of life was commonplace. Megasthenes, Fa Hein, Heun Tsang, and many other travelers wrote detailed accounts of a flourishing God-centered life in India. Families opened their homes to one and all, and temples celebrated festivals daily and fed thousands sumptuously. *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* describes in detail one such festival, honoring the installation of the deity Śrī Gopāla in Vṛndāvana six hundred years ago. Even though it occurred during the fearful Mughal reign, residents of all the nearby villages and provinces came together, and under the spiritual leadership of Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, they rejoiced, giving pleasure to Kṛṣṇa. Traditionally, grand festivals and opulence prevailed, even though individual families possessed little.

Since the focus of activities then was to serve and love God, Kṛṣṇa, people were happy. They spent their evenings with devotees in local temples, where *kīrtanas,* talks, and devotional dramas entertained them, keeping them spiritually surcharged. Today, despite the best timesaving devices, people are getting busier and regret having no free time to relax. Modern entertainment consists simply of bombardment by images on screens, desensitizing us and reducing us to a life of programmed robots.

Life Centered on Love

The formula for happiness then was simple: live a Kṛṣṇa conscious way of life. We can each adopt the same

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The Sunday Feast

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today. As the media goads us on a mad spree to possess more, Kamal Lochan Das and Mohanty are shining examples of a dying tradition that is most effective to guaranteeing a happy life. In fast-paced modern life, rarely does someone throw open his doors to serve and feed a large number of strangers. In a couple of hours we were gone, and we might never meet this family again. For the Das family, however, we were not strangers; we were friends who became an integral part of their life, filled with love and service. As we reluctantly trudged along the swampy fields to catch our buses to the railway station, we knew we were leaving Remuna with a heavy heart.

Though humbled and inspired by this trip, we also felt at home hearing loud film music blasting through the neighborhood and seeing a group of teenagers dancing wildly to the passionate Bollywood numbers. We were sorry that the next generation is catching up with us city folks and embarking on a tragic life of "simply living and hardly thinking." ❁

Vraja Vihārī Dāsa, MBA, serves full-time at ISKCON Mumbai and teaches Kṛṣṇa consciousness to students at various colleges.

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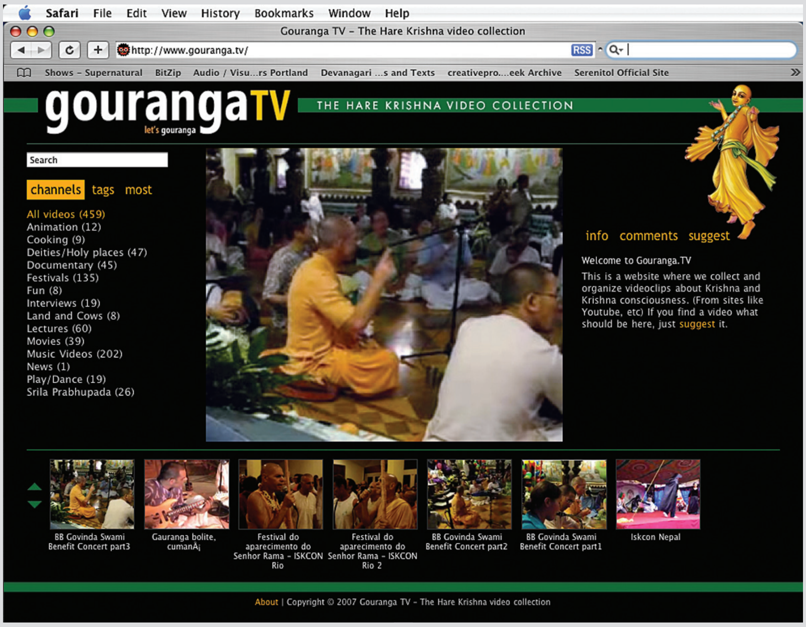
Profiles of Kṛṣṇa-related websites

Gouranga TV: The Hare Krishna Video Collection—Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees the world over have been using the Internet to learn about, share, and spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As Internet technologies such as online video have become increasingly popular, some devotees have found creative ways to use them.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About

Welcome to Gouranga.TV

This is a website where we collect and organize videoclips about Krishna and Krishna consciousness. (From sites like Youtube, etc) If you find a video what should be here, just suggest it.

About | Copyright © 2007 Gouranga TV – The Hare Krishna video collection

Gouranga TV is the brainchild of Bindhu Mādhava Dāsa and Manorāma Dāsa, two Hungarian devotees. Their website, www.gouranga.tv, provides links to Kṛṣṇa conscious videos. The links are indexed into categories, and a search box lets you go directly to what you're looking for.

"Many Kṛṣṇa conscious videos are available online," says Manorama, "but when devotees try to find them, their searches often go unrewarded."

Many sites on the Internet allow people to upload videos, so devotees can upload festivals, *kīrtanas,* lectures, interviews, temple visits, deity *darśanas*—almost anything a video camera or cell phone can capture. But because anyone can upload to these sites, you might have to trawl through inappropriate or wrongly labelled videos while looking for the drops of nectar.

Manorāma Dāsa says, "We started Gouranga TV to help devotees in their searches by collecting and organizing Kṛṣṇa-related videos."

That there was room for an Internet service to provide a categorized and indexed site "came to our minds at the same time," say Bindhu and Manorāma.

"First we created Gouranga Group at Youtube.com, but we couldn't subcategorize the videos or add videos from other sources, such as Google or Revver. So we got the idea to start our own site—Gouranga TV."

"Come and help us collect links to all the Kṛṣṇa conscious videos available online," says Manorāma. "You can be a director, a camera operator, or a reporter. Tell us about the festival you attended, or share the lecture at your temple or the *darśana* of your favorite deities. We're waiting for your first show."

If you need help with your video, contact Manorāma and Bindhu Mādhava through their website: www.gouranga.tv.

EXCHANGES OF LOVE

In the interactions between the Lord and His devotees, both relish the highest happiness.

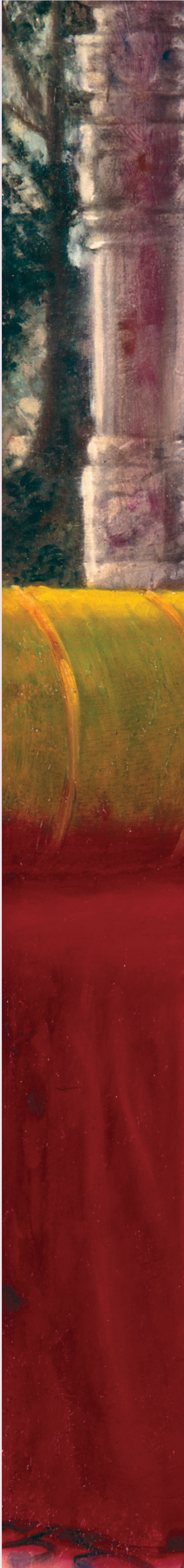
by Mohinī Rādhā Devī Dāsī

B*HAGAVAD-GĪTĀ* and other scriptures praise Arjuna for his close relationship with Kṛṣṇa. Arjuna is known for his mood of friendship (*sakha-bhāva*). Since relationships are by definition reciprocal, not only is Arjuna known as Kṛṣṇa's friend, but Kṛṣṇa is known as Arjuna's friend. Kṛṣṇa drove Arjuna's chariot and is therefore called Pārtha-sārathi, the "charioteer of Pārtha (Arjuna)." This name shows Kṛṣṇa's special relationship with His devotee Arjuna.

Discussions of devotional service often emphasize the activities devotees perform to please Kṛṣṇa, but the transcendental relationship between the Lord and His devotees is dynamic, with the loving exchanges originating from both sides. Although Kṛṣṇa is sympathetic to everyone, He is especially favorable toward His devotees. This is called *bhakta-vatsala*, the Lord's affection for His devotees. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.29) Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna, "I envy no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all. But whoever renders service unto Me in devotion is a friend, is in Me, and I am also a friend to him." It seems contradictory to say that the Lord can be "equal to all" and, at the same time, pays special attention to His devotees. In his purport to this verse, Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that the Lord takes care of all living entities, or *jīvas*, who are all part of Him. He provides all resources necessary to sustain life; indeed, not a blade of grass moves without His sanction. As the Supreme controller who maintains all *jīvas,* Kṛṣṇa is equal to all.

On the other hand, Kṛṣṇa distinguishes among His parts according to how they relate to Him. He rewards

Right: Even though Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord, He and Arjuna interact with the relaxed familiarity of close friends.



Painting by Puṣkara Dāsa and Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī

the living entities according to their degree of surrender: "All of them—as they surrender unto Me—I reward accordingly." (Bg. 4.11) It is natural, therefore, that Kṛṣṇa takes special interest in His devotees, who are completely surrendered to Him and are constantly serving Him with love and devotion.

The Lord is a person, and the living entities are also individual persons, although they are minute and the Supreme Lord is unlimited. The analogy of a fire surrounded by many tiny sparks illustrates this concept: The sparks are tiny compared to the original fire, but the composition is the same. Like the relationship between the individual sparks and the fire, an eternal reciprocal relationship exists between the living entities and the Lord.

Kṛṣṇa is completely independent and self-satisfied, He accepts service from His devotees, and thus remains at the center of their lives.

For the devotee, who is favorably disposed toward the Lord in a relationship of loving service, this relationship is very special and the essence of his or her life. Kṛṣṇa consciousness means that Kṛṣṇa is the single focus for the devotee's actions, words, and desires. When this perfection is achieved, true reciprocity between Kṛṣṇa and the devotees takes place. Kṛṣṇa is dear to His devotees, and the devotees are dear to Him. Although He is completely independent and self-satisfied, He accepts service from His devotees, and thus remains at the center of their lives. The reciprocation between Kṛṣṇa and His devotees, enjoyable for both, is unique. Elsewhere in the *Gītā* (6.30), Kṛṣṇa confirms this reciprocity: "For one who sees Me everywhere and sees everything in Me, I am never lost, nor is he ever lost to Me."

In his explanation of the transcendental reciprocation between the Lord and His devotees, Śrīla Prabhupāda gives the example of a diamond ring: the diamond looks more beautiful next to the gold, and the gold looks more beautiful next to the diamond. (Bg. 9.29, Purport) In this way, the devotees glorify the Lord, and the Lord does not hesitate to glorify His devotees. He appears in this world just to please His devotees and punish demons who challenge His authority and trouble the devotees. (Bg. 4.8)

When the pure devotee renders service without asking anything in return, Kṛṣṇa is obliged and "becomes a kind of debtor to the devotees." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.8.27, Purport) This fact is often explained in connection with Rādhārāṇī and the *gopīs,* who are glorified by Caitanya Mahāprabhu as the topmost devotees. No one can control Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but Rādhārāṇī controls Him with her devotion. Likewise, He willingly allowed His mother, Yaśodā, to bind and scold Him. He showed His universal form to Arjuna and His four-armed form to Bhīṣmadeva upon hearing their prayers. Kṛṣṇa is the source of pleasure for His devotees, and He enjoys fulfilling their desires because their desires are purely Kṛṣṇa conscious.

Kṛṣṇa's desire to serve His devotees is prominent in His form as Lord Jagannātha, who presides at the great temple in Puri, Orissa, with His brother Baladeva and sister Subhadrā. Histories of the temple have recorded Lord Jagannātha's pastimes over hundreds of years. Once, Jagannātha and Baladeva disguised Themselves as soldiers and fought alongside Purushottama Maharaja, the king of Puri, in a battle against the king of Kanchi. The king of Kanchi had insulted Purushottama Maharaja for being a street-sweeper. (The king of Puri traditionally sweeps in front of Jagannātha's chariot at the annual Rathayātrā festival.) The humble king did not take the insult personally but as an offense against his beloved Jagannātha, and therefore he went into battle, emerging victorious under the command of the two Lords.

The Poet Salabega

Jagannātha is Kṛṣṇa, and His transcendental pastimes are unlimited and beyond comprehension. He showed special mercy to His poet-devotee Salabega, whose example illustrates the Lord's eagerness to reciprocate with His devotees. Born in the beginning of the seventeenth century, Salabega was the son of the widow of a Hindu *brāhmaṇa* and Lalbeg, a merciless commander of the Moghul Empire. Although his ruthless father intensely hated the Hindus, Salabega's mother was a fervent devotee of Lord Jagannātha, and she taught her son about the Lord.

Once, as a child or young man, Salabega became very ill, and the attending physicians thought he would die. Salabega miraculously recovered when he heard some devotees singing *bhajanas* (devotional songs) about Kṛṣṇa and Jagannātha and he began chanting Jagannātha's names. This was a pivotal moment in his devotional life. He remembered his mother's description of Viṣṇu's rescue of Gajendra, the king of the elephants, when chased by a crocodile. Like Dhruva Mahārāja and Śrī Prahlāda, Salabega had intense childlike faith in the mercy of the Lord.

As he grew older, Salabega learned to sing and compose devotional songs for the pleasure of Jagannātha, whom he sometimes called Kālia, "the dark darling." He eventually lived in Vṛndāvana, but he became anxious to see Lord Jagannātha in Puri. Because of his

Muslim birth, Salabega was denied entrance to the Puri temple, and he returned to Vṛndāvana in disappointment. Lord Jagannātha is known as Patita Pāvana, "the savior of the fallen," and so He comes out from the temple every year during the Rathayātrā festival to bestow his merciful glance upon all creatures. Salabega planned to visit Puri during the Rathayātrā festival.

On the way to Puri, however, he fell ill. Lamenting at the thought that he would miss the opportunity to see Jagannātha, he prayed that Jagannātha would wait for him, a sentiment prevalent in one of his songs: *satasa pacasha kosha cali na parai/ moha jivajaen nandighose thiva rahi*. "It is very difficult to walk the 750 *koshas* [the distance between Vṛndāvana and Jagannatha Puri] to see You. Please remain on Nandighosa until then."

Just then, a miracle occurred. Lord Jagannātha's cart, called Nandighosa, stopped, and no one could budge it. Jagannātha waited for the arrival of His dear devotee Salabega, who had the opportunity to sing directly to his dark darling and look at Him to his heart's content. Those who had criticized Salabega for his low birth were humbled as they saw the greatness of Salabega's devotion.

Salabega often returned to compose songs for Jagannātha at the spot where the Lord had stopped. Today, his *samādhi* (tomb) stands nearby on Grand Road.

Salabega's devotion apparently brought the Lord of the universe under his control. In tribute to this pastime, even to this day Lord Jagannātha's cart stops at Salabega's *samādhi* on Grand Road during the Rathayātrā procession.

Salabega's example teaches us that birth does not matter, that pure devotion transcends social status, such as being a *brāhmaṇa.* After all, we are not these bodies but spirit souls. To show the world that anyone can become Kṛṣṇa's pure devotee, Prabhupāda wanted his followers, most of whom were not *brāhmaṇas* by birth, to be brahminical in devotion and behavior.

Even the most neophyte devotees of the Lord can taste the sweetness of the Lord's reciprocity. It is said that when we take one step toward Kṛṣṇa, He takes a hundred steps toward us. When we remember that Vāmanadeva, Kṛṣṇa's incarnation as a dwarf *brāhmaṇa,* crossed the entire universe with two steps, Kṛṣṇa's hundred steps toward us are particularly significant. Even though no one is truly eligible to serve the Supreme Lord, He is so merciful that He accepts the devotee's humble attempts. (See *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.16.25, Purport.) The Lord is more eager to reclaim His conditioned parts than they are to return to Him, and He helps His devotees return home, back to Godhead: "Those who worship Me with devotion, meditating on My transcendental form—to them I carry what they lack and preserve what they have." (Bg. 9.22) Even if a devotee does not become completely purified in this lifetime, he or she will be able to continue on the path of devotional service in the next life. Spiritual gains, unlike material gains, are never lost.

The easiest way for us to feel Kṛṣṇa's reciprocation is through hearing and chanting His names: *śravaṇaṁ kīrtanam*. When Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahaprabhu, He made pure love of God, *premā,* available to everyone through the chanting of the holy names. In degraded Kali-yuga, the current age of quarrel and hypocrisy, this is the best method to achieve perfect Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is the *yuga-dharma,* the prescribed activity for the age. Kṛṣṇa's names are endowed with all His potency, which means He is present in His names. When we chant attentively, He will come to dance on our tongues. What greater reciprocation do we need than this?

Mohinī Rādhā Devī Dāsī graduated from Columbia University with a degree in English literature in 2004. She is a disciple of His Holiness Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami and lives with her husband, Nārada Ṛṣi Dāsa, in New York City.

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THE SOUND BEYOND SILENCE

Moving Up the Y-Axis

Silence may be golden, but there's a sound that's worth even more.

by Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa

photos by Yamarāja Dāsa

"MOST PEOPLE SPEAK because they find speech more tolerable than silence" reads a cheeky T-shirt slogan. A generalization, no doubt, but doesn't it contain a grain of truth? For many stressed and distressed people, even when their mouth is silent their mind is screaming and speech offers an easy distraction from the turmoil within. That's why the *Bhagavad-gītā* (17.16) declares *mauna* (silence) to be an austerity, not of the mouth, but of the mind. *Mauna* is not the dumb person's inability to speak or the inarticulate person's reluctance to speak or the talkative person's decision not to speak; it is the calmness of the mind that enables us to hear the guiding voice of God within.

Of course speech and silence both have their utility. In daily life, speech is a powerful and essential means for communication. Throughout history, social reformers (and deformers) galvanized followers by their power of speech. On the other hand, seekers introspected in silence for

enlightenment. Can we then conclude that speech is a vehicle for social transformation and silence for individual transformation?

The concluding aphorism of the *Vedānta-sūtra, anāvrttiḥ śabdāt,* resolves this dialectic by introducing an intriguing higher dimension: sound beyond silence.

A Mathematical Model of Life

Let's visualize our quest for happiness as movement on the y-axis of a mathematical model of life. We are all eternal spiritual beings who, due to spiritual amnesia, are misidentifying ourselves with our temporary material bodies. Material activity, beginning with material speech, increases forgetfulness of our natural spiritual joy and incriminates us in unending anxiety and misery. Thus it falls on the negative y-axis.

Mantra meditation gradually tunes our consciousness to the spiritual level where we can receive the guidance of the Supersoul.

The material inactivity associated with traditional yoga begins with material silence. It checks our preoccupation with the temporal and offers relief, but it alone does not revive our spiritual memory. Śrīla Prabhupāda compares yogic inactivity and the liberation associated with it to convalescence—not sick, but not healthy either. So it falls at the origin (the zero point) on the y-axis. But spiritual activity, beginning with spiritual sound, cures our amnesia by linking our consciousness with the all-attractive reservoir of all pleasure, God, and enlightens and enlivens us with divine wisdom and bliss. Hence it falls on the positive y-axis.

A mathematics novice might mistakenly think that the positive and negative axes are identical. Similarly a spiritual neophyte might mistakenly think that spiritual and material sounds are identical. But we can understand the difference through intelligence, and experience it through practice. Just as a child unaware of paper currency sees no difference between waste paper and a $100 bill, a spiritually immature person unaware of spiritual values sees no difference between ordinary material sound and extraordinary spiritual sound. Material sound agitates our mind; spiritual sound pacifies it. Material sound aggravates and perpetuates our amnesia; spiritual sound alleviates and eradicates it. Material sound entangles us; spiritual sound liberates us.

Since all sound is voiced through the same mouth, what makes a sound spiritual? Its connection with the source and sustenance of all spirituality: the supreme spiritual being, God, who resides on the positive infinity of the y-axis.

Spiritual sound—the revealed word of God—is exalted in all the great wisdom traditions of the world. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, St. John (1.1) states, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." In the Vedic tradition, hymns, verses, songs, mantras, *bhajanas,* and *kīrtanas* beckon adventurous spiritualists to higher realms of enlightenment and fulfillment.

The Sound of the Holy Name

The greater the sound's connection with God, the greater its spiritual potency. The sound most intimately connected with us is our own name. The same applies to God. Therefore the most powerful spiritual sound is the holy name of God. Indeed the holy name of God is identical to God, as asserted by the *Padma Purāṇa: abhinnatvān nāma-naminoḥ.* Hence chanting the holy name purifies us by bringing us in immediate and direct contact with God. Mantra meditation—meditation on the mantra composed of the holy names of God—gradually tunes our consciousness to the spiritual level where we can receive the guidance of the Supersoul in the heart, who is identical to the holy name.

Thus chanting achieves in one swift step what takes *mauna* two slow, arduous steps: first silence the clamor of the mind, and then perceive the voice of the Supersoul within. The *Kali Santaraṇa Upaniṣad,* a scripture containing practices tailored to our current age, unequivocally states, "In this age there is no means for purification other than the chanting of the *mahā-manta:* Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare."

Not only does the holy name purify most efficaciously, but also through group meditation on the sound of the holy name, or *saṅkīrtana,* devotees can simultaneously relish divine bliss and also share it with others. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "The topics of Lord Kṛṣṇa are so auspicious that they purify the speaker, the hearer, and the inquirer." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.1.1, Purport) Thus spiritual sound synthesizes the virtues of material sound and silence, for it offers us a unique vehicle for simultaneous individual and social transformation. Hence Vedic insights call for a revised rendition of a traditional saying: "Speech is silver, silence is golden—but spiritual speech is diamond."

Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa is a disciple of His Holiness Rādhānātha Swami. He holds a degree in electronics and telecommunication engineering and serves full-time at ISKCON Pune. To view his other writings and subscribe to his e-zine, The Spiritual Scientist, *visit his website: thespiritualscientist.com.*

HARE KRISHNA
HARE KRISHNA
KRISHNA KRISHNA
HARE HARE
HARE RAMA
HARE RAMA
RAMA RAMA
HARE HARE

OUR UNKNOWN FRIEND

He guides without coercing, hides without abandoning, watches without interfering, and loves without controlling.

by Gopīnātha Candra Dāsa

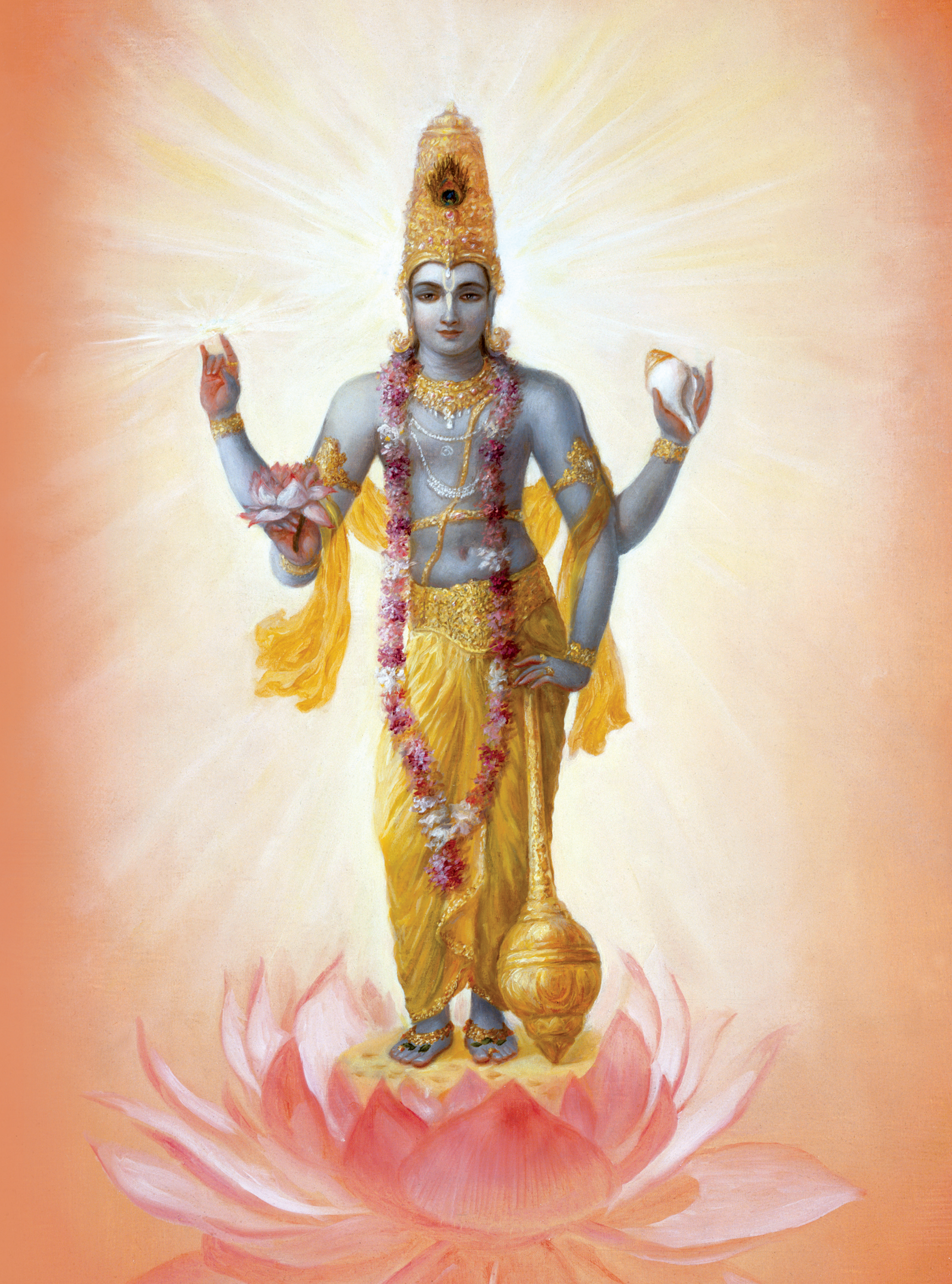
As a boy, one of my main passions was riding bicycles. My parents bought me my first bicycle in a town fifteen kilometers away from where I lived, and despite their loving concern and expressed wishes, I was adamant that I would ride it home.

It was fun riding alone on the shining asphalt roads, being overtaken by a speeding automobile every few minutes. But the journey soon seemed longer than expected. And when the highway sloped upward, the ride seemed unending. My feet resisted any more cycling motion. They preferred to walk instead, and I complied. Deep within, I wished that my father was by my side. At that moment a stranger who had been cycling behind me all along, but whom I hadn't noticed, came forward and offered to help. I was happy to learn that my father had arranged for him to follow me from a distance. My father had foreseen my precarious situation.

The Lord in the Heart

Years later I came in touch with the teachings of *Bhagavad-gītā*. The *Gītā* says that the Lord in His form of Paramātmā is situated in our hearts witnessing our activities. Skeptics often ask, "Why are we not conscious of His presence and His watchful eye? Why are we not aware of His pleasure and displeasure with

Right: Paramātmā, the form of the Lord in the heart, is a direct expansion of Lord Viṣṇu, the four-handed expansion of Lord Kṛṣṇa.



everything we do?"

The Lord makes Himself invisible to our consciousness so that we can exercise our free will. Without free will, there cannot be love. I defied my father's will, and out of love for me he made his watchful eye invisible in the first phase of my journey. Similarly, if again and again we defy the direction and will of the Lord within our hearts, He remains invisible to oblige our free will. Those engaged in irreligious activities do not want the Lord to watch them, so He hides Himself.

I wanted my father to leave me alone during the journey, and he did so, but because he loved me he never abandoned me. Similarly, Paramātmā is personal and intimate, and He never gives up on us. Even if we blaspheme Him or His devotees and do the most nefarious things to displease Him, He is always there in our hearts to give us shelter. There is no one closer than Him—on any level. Regardless of how much we abandon Him, He always remains the closest person to us. Innumerable living entities are envious of Him. Still, out of love, He never leaves even a single one for a single moment.

In my foolishness I didn't know what was good for me, and so I went against my father's will. We tend to go against Kṛṣṇa's will, even though to love and serve Kṛṣṇa—to willingly, spontaneously surrender to His will—is our constitutional nature, the essence of our existence. In that position we experience unlimited happiness. When we forget our constitutional position we come under the grip of the laws of karma. Kṛṣṇa has designed those laws so that we ultimately have to make the right choice of turning to Him, and then He gives us the highest ecstasy. He knows what is best for us.

When I looked for shelter I was pleasantly surprised to see that my father was waiting for me. Even if we are sent to hell, even if we are in a species of bacteria, our loving father, the Supreme Lord, is always there, waiting for us to turn to Him. He makes His presence visible to the degree that we accept His shelter. As we progress spiritually we get more and more experience of His watchful eye.

My father arranged for a man to help me out. Similarly the Supreme Lord makes so many arrangements to deliver us. He speaks through guru, sadhu, and *śāstra.* All we have to do is cooperate with Him.

Gopīnātha Candra Dāsa graduated from the India Institute of Technology (IIT) in Mumbai with a degree in civil engineering. Currently he serves full-time at ISKCON Mumbai and teaches Kṛṣṇa consciousness to students in various colleges.

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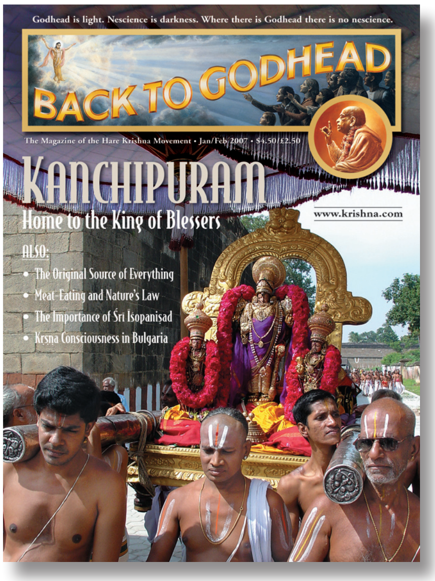

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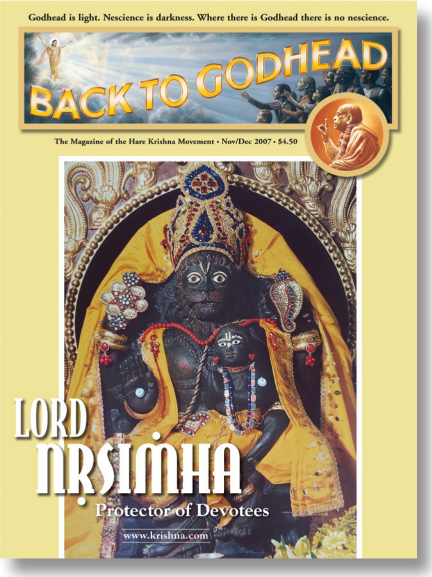

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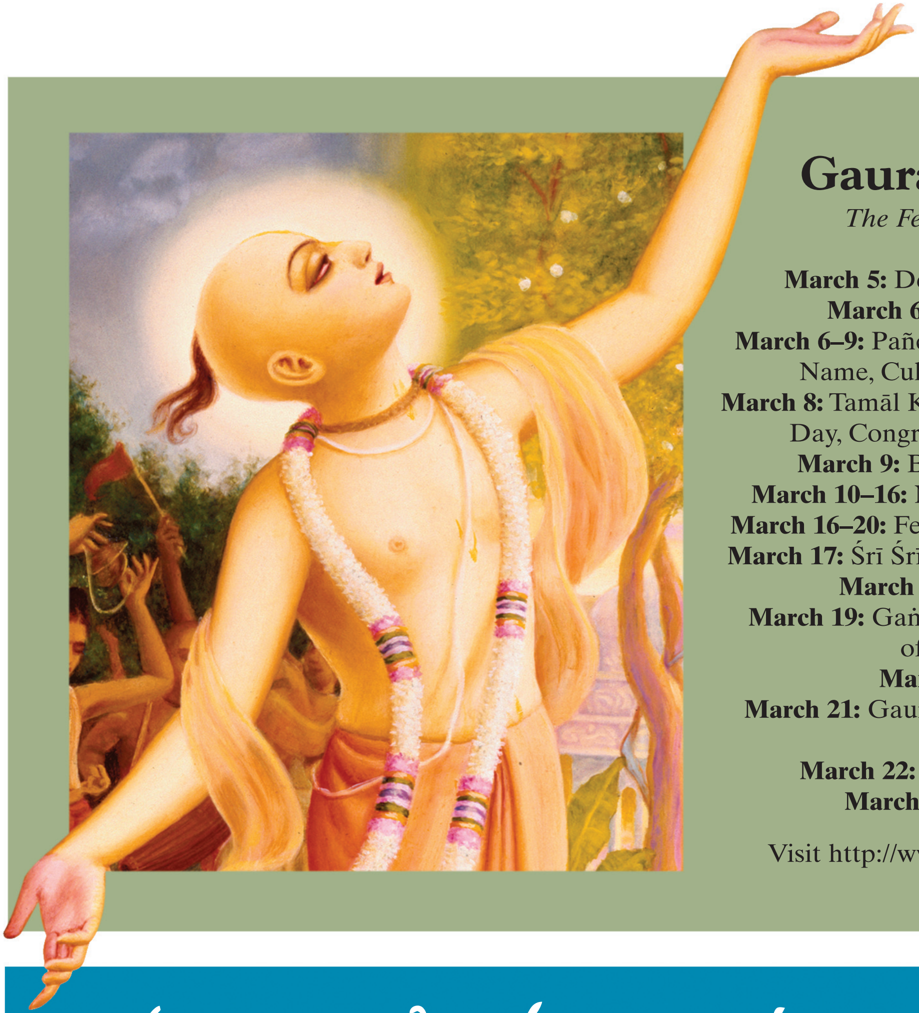

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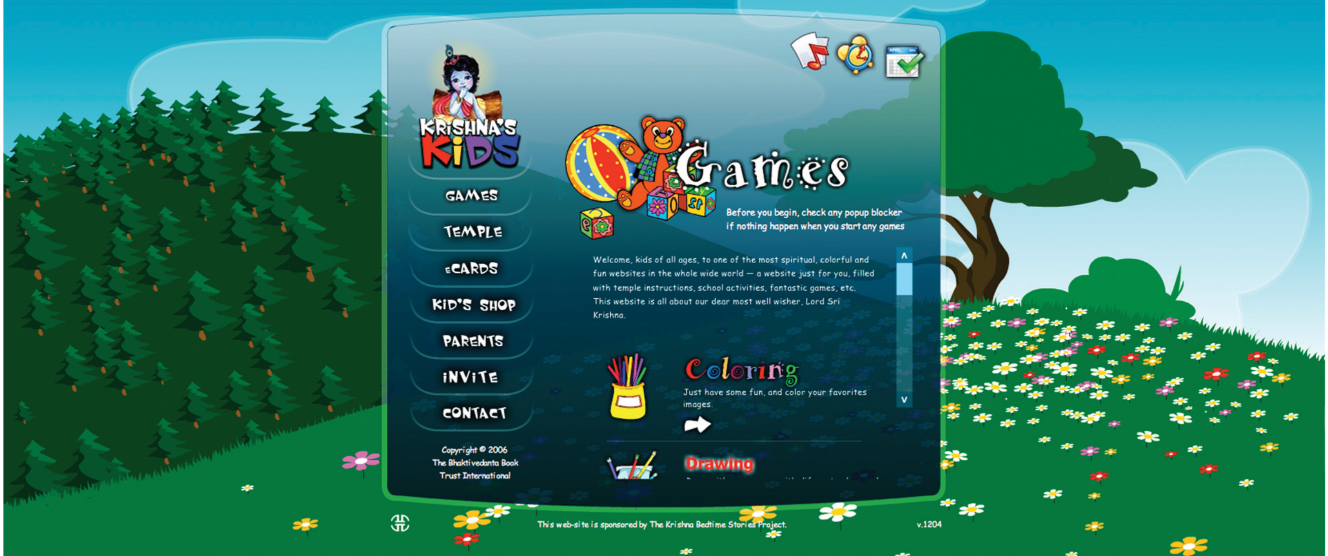

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Indore, MP (Krishna-Balarama Mandir) — Hare Krishna Vihar, Nipania Village/ Tel. (0731) 572794
Karnataka (Bhaktivedanta Eco-Village) — Nagodi P.O., Vollur Valley, Hosanagar Taluq, Shivmoga District, 577 425 (mail: Garuda Guha, Kollur, D.K. District, 576 220)
Mayapur, WB — (contact ISKCON Mayapur)
Puri, Orissa — ISKCON, Bhaktivedanta Ashram, Sipasirubuli, 752 001/ Tel. (06752) 230494
Surat, Gujarat — Bhaktivedanta Rajavidyalaya, Krishnalok, Surat-Bardoli Rd. Gangapur, P. O. Gangadhara, Dist. Surat, 394 310/ Tel. (02622) 63546
Vrindavan, UP — Vrinda Kund, Nandagaon, Dist. Mathura, U.P.

Many temples have their own website, which you can find at our online directory: http://directory.krishna.com

Note for international phone calls: When dialing from outside the country, drop the "0" that begins most city codes (the numbers shown in parentheses). **Exception:** For Russia, drop the initial "8." Telephone numbers include country codes, identified by a +. To save space, we've skipped the codes for North America (1) and India (91). ◆ Temples with restaurants or dining

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT

Kolkata, WB — Govinda’s, ISKCON House, 22 Gurusaday Rd., 700 019/ Tel. (033) 24756922, 24749009

CANADA

Calgary, Alberta — 313 Fourth St. N.E., T2E 3S3/ Tel. (403) 265-3302/ Fax: (403) 547-0795/ vamanstones@shaw.ca
Edmonton, Alberta — 9353 35th Ave. NW, T6E 5R5/ Tel. (780) 439-9999/ edmonton@harekrishnatemple.com
Montreal, Quebec — 1626 Pie IX Boulevard, H1V 2C5/ Tel. & fax: (514) 521-1301/ iskconmontreal@bellnet.ca
◆ **Ottawa, Ontario —** 212 Somerset St. E., K1N 6V4/ Tel. (613) 565-6544/ Fax: (613) 565-2575/ iskconottawa@sympatico.ca
Regina, Saskatchewan — 1279 Retallack St., S4T 2H8/ Tel. (306) 525-1640
◆ **Toronto, Ontario —** 243 Avenue Rd., M5R 2J6/ Tel. (416) 922-5415/ Fax: (416) 922-1021/ toronto@iskcon.net
◆ **Vancouver, B.C. —** 5462 S.E. Marine Dr., Burnaby V5J 3G8/ Tel. (604) 433-9728/ Fax: (604) 648-8715; Govinda’s Bookstore & Cafe: (604) 433-7100 or (888) 433-8722/ akrura@krishna.com

RURAL COMMUNITY

Ashcroft, B.C. — Saranagati Dhama (mail: P.O. Box 99, V0K 1A0)/ iskconsaranagati@hotmail.com

U.S.A.

Atlanta, Georgia — 1287 South Ponce de Leon Ave., N.E., 30306/ Tel. & fax: (404) 377-8680/ bala108@earthlink.net
Austin, Texas — 10700 Jonwood Way, 78753/ Tel. (512) 835-2121/ Fax: (512) 835-8479/ sda@backtohome.com
Baltimore, Maryland — 200 Bloomsbury Ave., Catonsville, 21228/ Tel. (410) 719-1776/ Fax: (410) 799-0642/ info@baltimorekrishna.com
Berkeley, California — 2334 Stuart Street, 94705/ Tel. (510) 649-8619/ Fax: (510) 665-9366
Boise, Idaho — 1615 Martha St., 83706/ Tel. (208) 344-4274/ boise_temple@yahoo.com
Boston, Massachusetts — 72 Commonwealth Ave., 02116/ Tel. (617) 247-8611/ radhagopi@juno.com
◆ **Chicago, Illinois —** 1716 W. Lunt Ave., 60626/ Tel. (773) 973-0900/ Fax: (773) 973-0526/ information@iskconchicago.com
Columbus, Ohio — 379 W. Eighth Ave., 43201/ Tel. (614) 421-1661/ Fax: (614) 294-0545/ rmanjari@sbcglobal.net
◆ **Dallas, Texas —** 5430 Gurley Ave., 75223/ Tel. (214) 827-6330/ Fax: (214) 823-7264/ txkrishnas@aol.com; restaurant: vegetariantaste@aol.com
◆ **Denver, Colorado —** 1400 Cherry St., 80220/ Tel. (303) 333-5461/ Fax: (303) 321-9052/ info@krishnadenver.com
Detroit, Michigan — 383 Lenox Ave., 48215/ Tel. (313) 824-6000/ gaurangi108@hotmail.com
Gainesville, Florida — 214 N.W. 14th St., 32603/ Tel. (352) 336-4183/ Fax: (352) 379-2927/ kalakantha.acbsp@pamho.net
Hartford, Connecticut — 1683 Main St., E. Hartford, 06108/ Tel. & fax: (860) 289-7252/ pyari@sbcglobal.net
◆ **Honolulu, Hawaii —** 51 Coelho Way, 96817/ Tel. (808) 595-3947/ tejaprakash@gmail.com
Houston, Texas — 1320 W. 34th St., 77018/ Tel. (713) 686-4482/ Fax: (713) 956-9968/ management@iskconhouston.org
Kansas City, Missouri — Rupanuga Vedic College (Men’s Seminary), 5201 The Paseo, 64110/ Tel. (800) 340-5286/ Fax: (816) 361-0509/ info@rvc.edu
Laguna Beach, California — 285 Legion St., 92651/ Tel. (949) 494-7029/ pancatattvalagunabeach@earthlink.net
◆ **Los Angeles, California —** 3764 Watseka Ave., 90034/ Tel. (310) 836-2676/ Fax: (310) 839-2715/ shastra.krit@pamho.net
◆ **Miami, Florida —** 3220 Virginia St., 33133/ Tel. (305) 442-7218/ Fax: (305) 444-7145
New Orleans, Louisiana — 2936 Esplanade Ave., 70119/ Tel. (504) 304-0032 (office) or (504) 638-3244 (temple)/ iskcon.new.orleans@pamho.net
New York, New York — 305 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn, 11217/ Tel. (718) 855-6714/ Fax: (718) 875-6127/ ramabhadra@aol.com
New York, New York — 26 Second Avenue, 10003/ Tel. (212) 253-6182/ krishnanyc@gmail.com
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania — 41 West Allens Lane, 19119/ Tel. (215) 247-4600/ Fax: (215) 247-8702/ iskconphilly@aol.com
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania — 1408 South St., 19146/ Tel. (215) 985-9303/ savecows@aol.com
Phoenix, Arizona — 100 S. Weber Dr., Chandler, 85226/ Tel. (480) 705-4900/ Fax: (480) 705-4901/ svgd108@yahoo.com
Portland, Oregon — 3766 SE Division, 97202/ Tel. (503) 236-6734; info@iskconportland.com
◆ **St. Louis, Missouri —** 3926 Lindell Blvd., 63108/ Tel. (314) 535-8085 or 534-1708/ Fax: (314) 535-0672/ iskcon.stl@pamho.net
◆ **San Diego, California —** 1030 Grand Ave., Pacific Beach, 92109/ Tel. (310) 895-0104/ Fax: (858) 483-0941/ krishna.sandiego@gmail.com
San Jose, California — 951 S. Bascom Ave., 95128/ Tel. (408) 293-4959/ iskconsanjose@yahoo.com
Seattle, Washington — 1420 228th Ave. S.E., Sammamish, 98075/ Tel. (425) 391-3293/ Fax: (425) 868-8928/ info@iskconseattle.com
◆ **Spanish Fork, Utah —** Krishna Temple Project & KHQN Radio, 8628 S. State Road, 84660/ Tel. (801) 798-3559/ Fax: (810) 798-9121/ carudas@earthlink.net
Tallahassee, Florida — 1323 Nylic St., 32304/ Tel. & fax: (850) 224-3803/ darudb@hotmail.com
Towaco, New Jersey — 100 Jacksonville Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 109), 07082/ Tel. & fax: (973) 299-0970/ newjersey@iskcon.net
◆ **Tucson, Arizona —** 711 E. Blacklidge Dr., 85719/ Tel. (520) 792-0630/ Fax: (520) 791-0906/ tucphx@cs.com
Washington, D.C. — 10310 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, Maryland 20854/ Tel. (301) 299-2100/ Fax: (301) 299-5025/ ad@pamho.net

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Alachua, Florida (New Raman Reti) — 17306 N.W. 112th Blvd., 32615 (mail: P.O. Box 819, 32616)/ Tel. (386) 462-2017/ Fax: (386) 462-2641/ alachuatemple@alltel.net
Carriere, Mississippi (New Talavan) — 31492 Anner Road, 39426/ Tel. (601) 749-9460 or 799-1354/ Fax: (601) 799-2924/ talavan@hughes.net
Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill) — Carr. 181, Km. 16.3, Bo. Santa Rita, Gurabo (mail: HC-01, Box 8440, Gurabo, PR 00778)/ (Office) Tel. & fax: (787) 737-4265/ (Temple) Tel. (787)712-0358/ iskcon_pr@hotmail.com
Hillsborough, North Carolina (New Goloka) — 1032 Dimmocks Mill Rd., 27278/ Tel. (919) 732-6492/ bkgoswami@earthlink.net
◆ **Moundsville, West Virginia (New Vrindaban) —** R.D. No. 1, Box 319, Hare Krishna Ridge, 26041/ Tel. (304) 843-1600; Guest House, (304) 845-5905/ Fax: (304) 854-0023/ mail@newvrindaban.com
Mulberry, Tennessee (Murari-sevaka) — 532 Murari Lane, 37359 (mail: P.O. Box 108, Lynchburg, TN 37352)/ Tel. (931) 632-0632/ Fax: (931) 759-6888/ murari_sevaka@yahoo.com
Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gita Nagari) — R.D. No. 1, Box 839, 17082/ Tel. (717) 527-4101/ kodwin@yahoo.com
Sandy Ridge, North Carolina (Prabhupada Village) — 1264 Prabhupada Rd., 27046/ Tel. (336) 593-9888

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Gurabo, Puerto Rico — Goura's, Calle Andrés Arúz 200, Plaza Nazario, 00778/ Tel. (787) 712-0000
Hato Rey, Puerto Rico — Tamal Krishna's Veggie Garden, 131 Eleanor Roosevelt, 00918/ Tel. (787) 754-6959/ Fax: (787) 756-7769/ tkveggiegarden@aol.com
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania — Govinda's, 1408 South. St., 19146/ Tel. (215) 985-9303/ Fax: (215) 966-1242
Seattle, Washington — My Sweet Lord, 5521 University Way, 98105/ Tel. (425) 643-4664

UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND

Belfast, Northern Ireland — Brooklands, 140 Upper Dunmurray Lane, BT17 OHE/ Tel. +44 (028) 9062 0530
Birmingham, England — 84 Stanmore Rd., Edgbaston B16 9TB/ Tel. +44 (0121) 420 4999/ birmingham@iskcon.org.uk
Cardif, Wales — The Soul Centre, 116 Cowbridge Rd., Canton/ Tel. +44 (02920) 390391/ the.soul.centre@pamho.net
Coventry, England — Kingfield Rd., Coventry (mail: 19 Gloucester St., Coventry CV1 3BZ)/ Tel. +44 (024) 7655 2822 or 5420/ haridas.kds@pamho.net
Leicester, England — 21 Thoresby St., North Evington, LE5 4GU/ Tel. +44 (0116) 276 2587/ pradyumna.jas@pamho.net
Lesmahagow, Scotland — Karuna Bhavan, Bankhouse Rd., Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, ML11 0ES/ Tel. +44 (01555) 894790/ Fax: +44 (01555) 894526/ karunabhavan@aol.com
◆ **London, England (city) —** 10 Soho St., W1D 3DL/ Tel. +44 (020) 7437-3662; residential /pujaris, 7439-3606; shop, 7287-0269; Govinda’s Restaurant, 7437-4928/ Fax: +44 (020) 7439-1127/ london@pamho.net
◆ **London, England (country) —** Bhaktivedanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Lane, Watford, Herts, WD25 8EZ/ Tel. +44 (01923) 857244/ Fax: +44 (01923) 852896/ bhaktivedanta.manor@pamho.net; (for accommodations:) bmguesthouse@gmail.com
London, England (south) — 42 Enmore Road, South Norwood, SE25 5NG/ Tel. +44 (020) 8656 4296
London, England (Kings Cross) — 102 Caledonain Rd., Kings Cross, Islington, N1 9DN/ Tel. +44 (020) 7168 5732/ foodforalluk@aol.com
Manchester, England — 20 Mayfield Rd., Whalley Range, M16 8FT/ Tel. +44 (0161) 226-4416
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England — 304 Westgate Rd., NE4 6AR/ Tel. +44 (0191) 272 1911/ newcastle@iskcon.org.uk
◆ **Swansea, Wales —** 8 Craddock St., SA1 3EN/ Tel. +44 (01792) 468469/ iskcon.swansea@pamho.net; restaurant: govin–das@hotmail.com

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Upper Lough Erne, Northern Ireland — Govindadwipa Dhama, Inisrath Island, Derrylin, Co. Fermanagh, BT92 9GN/ Tel. +44 (028) 6772 1512/ govindadwipa@pamho.net
London, England — (contact Bhaktivedanta Manor)
(Krishna conscious programs are held regularly in more than forty other cities in the U.K. For information, contact ISKCON Reader Services, P.O. Box 730, Watford WD25 8EZ, UK; www.iskcon.org.uk)

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Dublin, Ireland — Govinda’s, 4 Aungier St., Dublin 2/ Tel. +353 (01) 475 0309/ Fax: (01) 478 6204/ info@govindas.ie
Dublin, Ireland — Govinda’s, 83 Middle Abbey St., Dublin 1/ Tel. +353 (01) 661 5095/ info@govindas.ie
Dublin, Ireland — Govinda's, 18 Merrion Row, Dublin 2/ Tel. +353 (01) 661 5095/ praghosa.sdg@pamho.net

AUSTRALASIA

AUSTRALIA

Adelaide — 25 Le Hunte St. (mail: P.O. Box 114, Kilburn, SA 5084)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (08) 8359-5120/ iskconsa@tpg.com.au
Brisbane — 95 Bank Rd., Graceville (mail: P.O. Box 83, Indooroopilly), QLD 4068/ Tel. +61 (07) 3379-5455/ Fax: +61 (07) 3379-5880/ brisbane@iskcon.org.au
Canberra — 44 Limestone Ave., Ainslie, ACT 2602 (mail: P.O. Box 1411, Canberra, ACT 2601)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (02) 6262-6208/ iskcon@harekrishnacanberra.com
Melbourne — 197 Danks St. (mail: P.O. Box 125), Albert Park , VIC 3206/ Tel. +61 (03) 9699-5122/ Fax: +61 (03) 9690-4093/ melbourne@pamho.net
Newcastle — 28 Bull St., Mayfield, NSW 2304/ Tel. +61 (02) 4967-7000/ iskcon_newcastle@yahoo.com.au

Perth — 144 Railway Parade (corner of The Strand) [mail: P.O. Box 102], Bayswater, WA 6053/ Tel. +61 (08) 9370-1552/ Fax: +61 (08) 9272-6636/ perth@pamho.net
Sydney — 180 Falcon St., North Sydney, NSW 2060 (mail: P.O. Box 459, Cammeray, NSW 2062)/Tel. +61 (02) 9959-4558/ Fax: +61 (02) 9957-1893/ info@iskcon.com.au
Sydney — Govinda's Yoga and Meditation Centre, 112 Darlinghurst Rd., Darlinghurst NSW 2010 (mail: P.O. Box 174, Kings Cross 1340)/ Tel. +61 (02) 9380-5162/ Fax: +61 (02) 9360-1736/ sita@govindas.com.au

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Bambra, VIC (New Nandagram) — 50 Seaches Outlet, off 1265 Winchelsea Deans Marsh Rd., Bambra VIC 3241/ Tel. +61 (03) 5288-7383
Cessnock, NSW (New Gokula) — Lewis Lane (off Mount View Rd., Millfield, near Cessnock [mail: P.O. Box 399, Cessnock, NSW 2325])/ Tel. +61 (02) 4998-1800/ Fax: +61 (02) 9957-1893
Murwillumbah, NSW (New Govardhana) — Tyalgum Rd., Eungella (mail: P.O. Box 687), NSW 2484/ Tel. +61 (02) 6672-6579/ Fax: +61 (02) 6672-5498/ ajita@in.com.au

RESTAURANTS

Brisbane — Govinda's, 99 Elizabeth St., 1st floor, QLD 4000/ Tel. +61 (07) 3210-0255
Brisbane — Krishna's Cafe, 1st Floor, 82 Venture St., West End, QLD 4000/ brisbane@pamho.net
Cairns — Gaura Nitai's, 55 Spence St., Cairns, QLD/ Tel. +61 (07) 4031-2255 or (0425) 725 901/ Fax: +61 (07) 4031 2256
Christchurch, NZ — 83 Bealey Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 25-190)/ Tel. +64 (03) 366-5174/ Fax: +64 (03) 366-1965/ iskconchch@clear.net.nz
Hamilton, NZ — 188 Maui St., RD 8, Te Rapa/ Tel. +64 (07) 850-5108/ rmaster@wave.co.nz
Labasa, Fiji — Delailabasa (mail: P.O. Box 133)/ Tel. +679 812912
Lautoka, Fiji — 5 Tavewa Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 125)/ Tel. +679 6664112/ regprakash@excite.com
Maroochydore — Govinda's Vegetarian Cafe, 2/7 First Avenue, QLD 4558/ Tel. +61 (07) 5451-0299
Melbourne — Crossways, 1st Floor, 123 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (03) 9650-2939
Melbourne — Gopal's, 139 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (03) 9650-1578
Nausori, Fiji — Hare Krishna Cultural Centre, 2nd Floor, Shop & Save Building, 11 Gulam Nadi St., Nausori Town (mail: P.O. Box 2183, Govt. Bldgs., Suva)/ Tel. +679 9969748 or 3475097/ Fax : +679 3477436/ vdas@frca.org.fj
Rakiraki, Fiji — Rewasa (mail: P.O. Box 204)/ Tel. +679 694243
Suva, Fiji — 166 Brewster St. (mail: P.O. Box 4299, Samabula)/ Tel. +679 3318441/ Fax: +679 3319097/ iskconsuva@connect.com.fj
Wellington, NZ — 105 Newlands Rd., Newlands/ Tel. +64 (04) 478-4108/ iskcon.wellington@paradise.net.nz
Wellington, NZ — Gaura Yoga Centre, 1st Floor, 175 Vivian St. (mail: P.O. Box 6271, Marion Square)/Tel. +64 (04) 801-5500

RURAL COMMUNITY

Auckland, NZ (New Varshan) — Hwy. 28, Riverhead, next to Huapai Golf Course (mail: R.D. 2, Kumeu)/ Tel. +64 (09) 412-8075/ Fax: +64 (09) 412-7130

EUROPE (partial list)*

Amsterdam — Van Hilligaertstraat 17, 1072 JX/ Tel. +31 (020) 675-1404 or -1694/ Fax: +31 (020) 675-1405/ amsterdam@pamho.net
Barcelona — Plaza Reial 12, Entlo 2, 08002/ Tel. +34 93 302-5194/ templobcn@hotmail.com
Bergamo, Italy — Villaggio Hare Krishna (da Medolago strada per Terno d'Isola), 24040 Chignolo d'Isola (BG)/ Tel. +39 (035) 4940706
Budapest — Lehel Street 15–17, 1039 Budapest/ Tel. +36 (01) 391-0435/ Fax: (01) 397-5219/ nai@pamho.net
Copenhagen — Skjulhoj Alle 44, 2720 Vanlose, Copenhagen/ Tel. +45 4828 6446/ Fax: +45 4828 7331/ iskcon.denmark@pamho.net
Grödinge, Sweden — Radha-Krishna Temple, Korsnäs Gård, 14792 Grödinge, Tel.+46 (08) 53029800/ Fax: +46 (08) 53025062 / bmd@pamho.net
Helsinki — Ruoholahdenkatu 24 D (III krs) 00180/ Tel. +358 (9) 694-9879 or -9837
◆ **Lisbon —** Rua Dona Estefãnia, 91 R/C 1000 Lisboa/ Tel. & fax: +351(01) 314-0314 or 352-0038
Madrid — Espíritu Santo 19, 28004 Madrid/ Tel. +34 91 521-3096
Paris — 35 Rue Docteur Jean Vaquier, 93160 Noisy le Grand/ Tel. & fax: +33 (01) 4303-0951/ param.gati.swami@pamho.net
Prague — Jilova 290, Prague 5 - Zlicin 155 21/ Tel. +42 (02) 5795-0391/ info@harekrsna.cz
◆ **Radhadesh, Belgium —** Chateau de Petite Somme, 6940 Septon-Durbuy/ Tel. +32 (086) 322926 (restaurant: 321421)/ Fax: +32 (086) 322929/ radhadesh@pamho.net
◆ **Rome —** Govinda Centro Hare Krsna, via di Santa Maria del Pianto 16, 00186/ Tel. +39 (06) 68891540/ govinda.roma@harekrsna.it
◆ **Stockholm —** Fridhemsgatan 22, 11240/ Tel. +46 (08) 654-9002/ Fax: +46 (08) 650-881; Restaurant: Tel. & fax: +46 (08) 654-9004/ lokanatha@hotmail.com
Warsaw — Mysiadlo k. Warszawy, 05-500 Piaseczno, ul. Zakret 11/ Tel. +48 (022) 750-7797 or -8247/ Fax: +48 (022) 750-8249/ kryszna@post.pl
Zürich — Bergstrasse 54, 8030/ Tel. +41 (01) 262-3388/ Fax: +41 (01) 262-3114/ kgs@pamho.net

RURAL COMMUNITIES

France (La Nouvelle Mayapura) — Domaine d'Oublaisse, 36360, Lucay le Mâle/ Tel. +33 (02) 5440-2395/ Fax: +33 (02) 5440-2823/ oublaise@free.fr
Germany (Simhachalam) — Zielberg 20, 94118 Jandelsbrunn/ Tel. +49 (08583) 316/ info@simhachalam.de
Hungary (New Vraja-dhama) — Krisna-völgy, 8699 Somogyvamos, Fö u, 38/ Tel. & fax: +36 (085) 540-002 or 340-185/ info@krisnavolgy.hu
Italy (Villa Vrindavan) — Via Scopeti 108, 50026 San Casciano in Val di Pesa (FL)/ Tel. +39 (055) 820054/ Fax: +39 (055) 828470/ isvaripriya@libero.it
Spain (New Vraja Mandala) — (Santa Clara) Brihuega, Guadalajara/ Tel. +34 949 280436

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Barcelona — Restaurante Govinda, Plaza de la Villa de Madrid 4–5, 08002/ Tel. +34 (93) 318-7729
Copenhagen — Govinda's, Nørre Farimagsgade 82, DK-1364 Kbh K/ Tel. +45 3333 7444
Milan — Govinda's, Via Valpetrosa 5, 20123/ Tel. +39 (02) 862417
Oslo — Krishna's Cuisine, Kirkeveien 59B, 0364/ Tel. +47 (02) 260-6250
Zürich — Govinda Veda-Kultur, Preyergrasse 16, 8001/ Tel. & fax: +41 (01) 251-8859/ info@govinda-shop.ch

COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES (partial list)*

Kiev — 16, Zorany per., 04078/ Tel. +380 (044) 433-8312, or 434-7028 or -5533
Moscow — 8/3, Khoroshevskoye sh. (mail: P.O. Box 69), 125284/ Tel. +7 (095) 255-6711/ Tel. & fax: +7 (095) 945-3317

ASIA (partial list)*

Bangkok, Thailand — Soi3, Tanon Itsarapap, Toonburi/ Tel. +66 (02) 9445346 or (081) 4455401 or (089) 7810623/ swami.bvv.narasimha@pamho.net
Dhaka, Bangladesh — 5 Chandra Mohon Basak St., Banagram,1203/ Tel. +880 (02) 236249/ Fax: (02) 837287/ iskcon_bangladesh@yahoo.com
Hong Kong — 6/F Oceanview Court, 27 Chatham Road South (mail: P.O. Box 98919)/ Tel. +852 (2) 739-6818/ Fax: +852 (2) 724-2186/ iskcon.hong.kong@pamho.net
Jakarta, Indonesia — Yayasan Radha-Govinda, P.O. Box 2694, Jakarta Pusat 10001/ Tel. +62 (021) 489-9646/ matsyads@bogor.wasantara.net.id
Katmandu, Nepal — Budhanilkantha (mail: GPO Box 3520)/ Tel. +977 (01) 373790 or 373786/ Fax: +977 (01) 372976 (Attn: ISKCON)/ iskcon@wlink.com.np
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia — Lot 9901, Jalan Awan Jawa, Taman Yarl, 58200 Kuala Lumpur/ Tel. +60 (3) 7980-7355/ Fax: +60 (3) 7987-9901/ president@iskconkl.com
Manila, Philippines — Radha-Madhava Center, #9105 Banuyo St., San Antonio village, Makati City/ Tel. +63 (02) 8963357; Tel. & fax: +63 (02) 8901947/ iskconmanila@yahoo.com
Myitkyina, Myanmar — ISKCON Sri Jagannath Temple, Bogyoke Street, Shansu Taung, Myitkyina, Kachin State/ mahanadi@mptmail.net.mm
Tai Pei City, Taiwan — Ting Zhou Rd. Section 3, No. 192, 4F, Tai Pei City 100/ Tel. +886 (02) 2365-8641/ dayal.nitai.tkg@pamho.net
Tokyo, Japan — Subaru 1F, 4-19-6 Kamitakada, Nakano-ku, Tokyo 164-0002/ Tel. +81 (03) 5343-9147 or (090) 6544-9284/ Fax: +81 (03) 5343-3812/ damodara@krishna.jp

LATIN AMERICA (partial list)*

Buenos Aires, Argentina — Centro Bhaktivedanta, Andonaegui 2054, Villa Urquiza, CP 1431/ Tel. +54 (01) 523-4232/ Fax: +54 (01) 523-8085/ iskcon-ba@gopalnet.com
Caracas, Venezuela — Av. Los Proceres (con Calle Marquez del Toro), San Bernardino/ Tel. +58 (212) 550-1818
Guayaquil, Ecuador — 6 de Marzo 226 and V. M. Rendon/ Tel. +593 (04) 308412 or 309420/ Fax: +564 302108/ gurumani@gu.pro.ec
◆ **Lima, Peru —** Schell 634 Miraflores/ Tel. +51 (014) 444-2871
Mexico City, Mexico — Tiburcio Montiel 45, Colonia San Miguel, Chapultepec D.F., 11850/ Tel. +52 (55) 5273-1953/ Fax: +52 (55) 52725944
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*The full list appears in the January/February and July/August issues, and is always available at Krishna.com, where the list also includes Krishna conscious gatherings.

Carnivore Nation

IN THE LAST ISSUE, I discussed human exceptionalism, the idea that human beings hold a unique status in the natural world. Now I'll move on to a related point.

In the West, human exceptionalism is especially championed by adherents to the Judeo-Christian tradition. Most theists in the United States identify themselves as Christians, and exceptionalism has a firm hold here, at the expense of millions of slaughtered animals. One can only imagine how much better—and closer to the "peaceable kingdom" of the Bible—this country would be if Christians stopped killing animals. Unfortunately, "Christian nation" has become synonymous with "carnivore nation."

Most Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees find the rule against meat-eating extremely easy to follow. Even many people who leave Kṛṣṇa consciousness stay vegetarians. Our children, too, usually abstain from meat even when they stray from our other practices. For almost every devotee, giving up meat is not at all difficult.

Which is why it's so hard for us to understand why Christians can't seem to do it. One reason is that they don't see anything wrong with eating meat. Devotees respond to that position with incredulity. How can anyone think it's okay to needlessly kill animals, often in unmentionably cruel ways? On the meat-eater's behalf, the bloody execution goes on unseen in "packing houses." The scene is so ghastly that slaughterhouse workers have the highest turnover rate of any occupation.

The "we need the protein" argument is also invalid. Human beings don't need meat to survive. No one in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is malnourished. I've been a vegetarian for more than thirty years, and I'm doing just fine.

Meat-eating is usually inherited. People born and bred in carnivorous families tend to stay meat-eaters. They don't think about it; they just like meat. And depending on which meat-eating culture they're born into, they like particular kinds of meat. The Oriental custom of eating dogs appalls most Western meat-eaters. A popular anecdote tells of a Western woman picking out a cute puppy in an Oriental bazaar, thinking it will be her pet, only to have it returned to her skinned, gutted, wrapped, and ready to cook. When a famous American football player recently pleaded guilty to involvement in illegal dog-fighting, his mistreatment of dogs outraged millions of American meat-eaters, who somehow ignored the fact that at least the dogs had a fighting chance, unlike animals in the slaughterhouse.

It's important to understand that nonviolence toward animals in no way detracts from taking care of human beings, the focus of the Christian ideal. In fact, the meat industry harms human beings, and not just morally and spiritually. Christians want to feed the world's hungry, but land dedicated to raising animals for slaughter could be used much more efficiently for food crops. And overgrazing by slaughterhouse-bound animals is destroying millions of valuable acres. Vegetarianism is clearly a good way to serve humanity.

A quick Internet search reveals many arguments in favor of vegetarianism, from a variety of perspectives. As devotees of Kṛṣṇa, our main motivation is simple: We eat only food offered to Kṛṣṇa, and He likes vegetarian food. The long list of benefits from a vegetarian diet is just one of many examples of the good things that come, even in this world, from devotion to Kṛṣṇa. Why shouldn't devotion to Jesus Christ bring similar benefits?—*Nāgarāja Dāsa*

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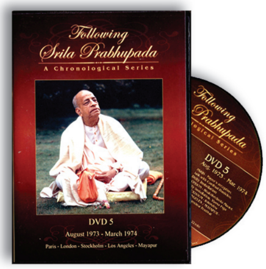
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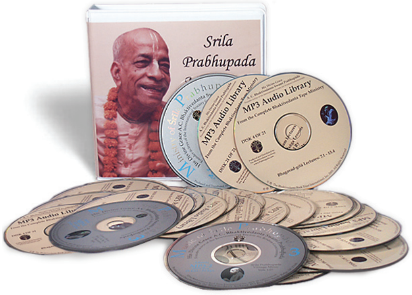

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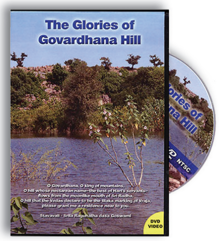
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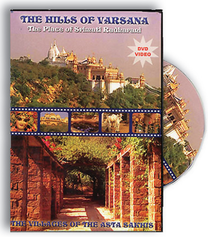
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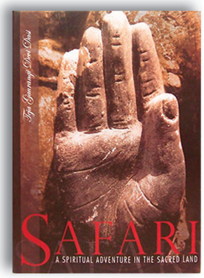
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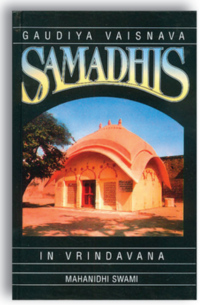
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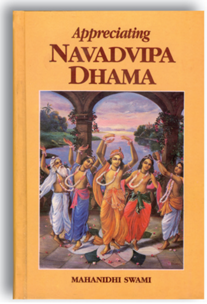
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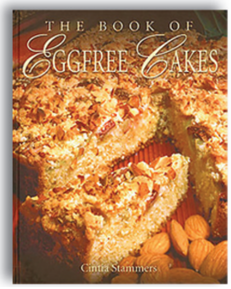
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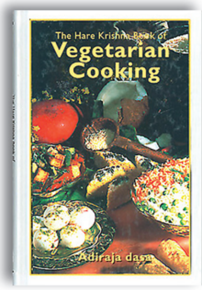
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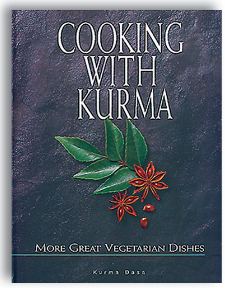
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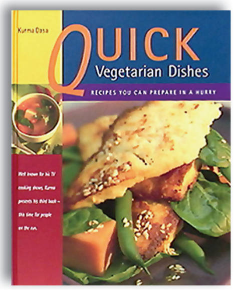
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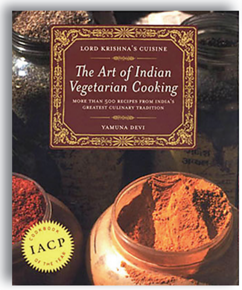
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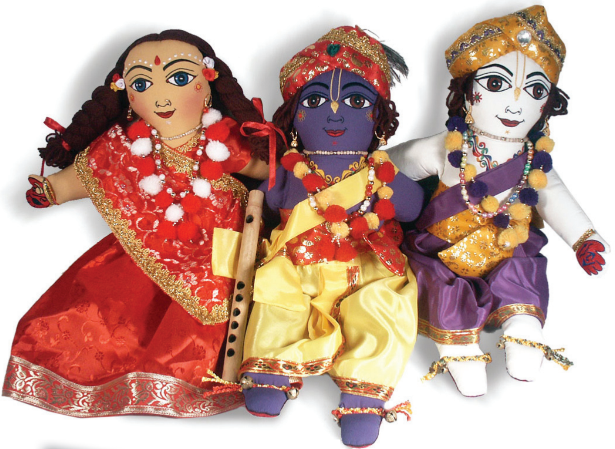

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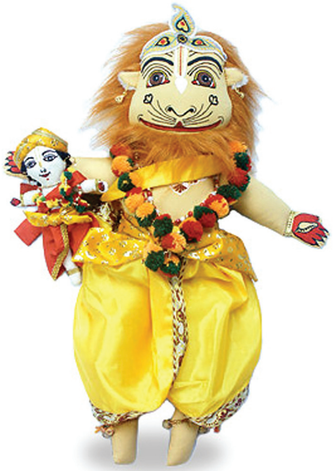

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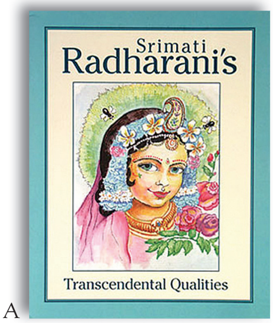
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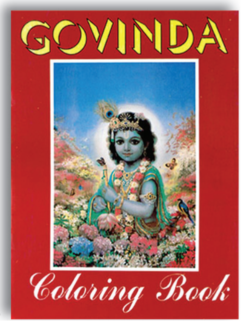
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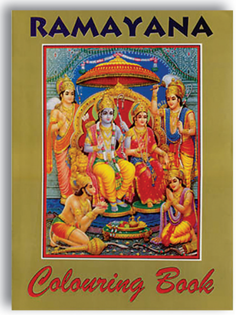
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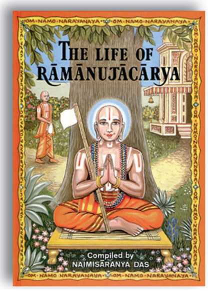

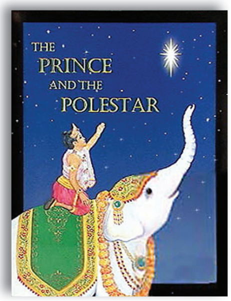

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VEDIC THOUGHTS

Seekers of the Absolute Truth are never allured by unnecessary engagements in sense gratification because the serious students seeking the Absolute Truth are always overwhelmed with the work of researching the Truth. In every sphere of life, therefore, the ultimate end must be seeking after the Absolute Truth, and that sort of engagement will make one happy because he will be less engaged in varieties of sense gratification.

His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.10, Purport

If we desire to follow an auspicious course in life, then disregarding the theories of even countless people, we should hear only instructions from a transcendental source.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura
Upadeśāvalī 10

Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer or give away, and whatever austerities you perform—do that, O son of Kuntī, as an offering to Me.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa
Bhagavad-gītā 9.27

Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the all-pervading Supreme Personality of Godhead, who possesses unlimited transcendental qualities. Acting from within the cores of the hearts of all philosophers, who propagate various views, He causes them to forget their own souls while sometimes agreeing and sometimes disagreeing among themselves. Thus He creates within this material world a situation in which they are unable to come to a conclusion. I offer my obeisances unto Him.

Prajāpati Dakṣa
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.4.31

By scrutinizingly reviewing all the revealed scriptures and judging them again and again, it is now concluded that Lord Nārāyaṇa [Kṛṣṇa] is the Supreme Absolute Truth, and thus He alone should be worshiped.

Padma Purāṇa, Skanda Purāṇa, Liṅga Purāṇa

The general situation is that the *ātivāhika* demigods carry souls enlightened with transcendental knowledge to the spiritual world. However, those devotees who are especially distressed in separation from the Lord are carried there by the Supreme Lord Himself, for the Lord becomes impatient and cannot tolerate any delay in bringing them back to Him.

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa
Commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra*
(Invocation, *Sūtra* 16)

O my Lord, as powerful as fire, O omnipotent one, now I offer You all obeisances, falling on the ground at Your feet. O my Lord, please lead me on the right path to reach You, and since You know all that I have done in the past, please free me from the reactions to my past sins so that there will be no hindrance to my progress.

Śrī Īśopaniṣad, Mantra 18

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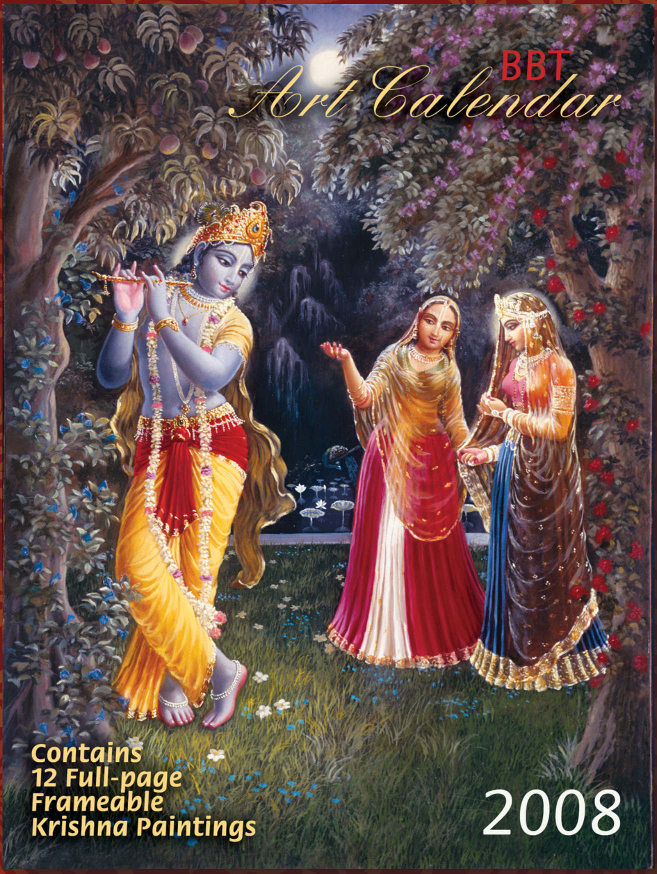
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